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Edited by Sir John Hammerton

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AGAIN THE UNION JACK FLIES OVER TOBRUK. By Friday, Nov. 13, 1942, this Axis fortress was for the second time in our hands South Africans being the first to enter. Taken during Gen. Wavell's advance in Jan. 1941 Tobruk withstood eight months' siege from April to December of that year, when it was relieved by our second Libyan offensive. On June 21 this year it was retaken by the Germans, but following Gen. Montgomery's decisive victory in the Battle of Egypt, the Nazis made no attempt to hold it. *Photo, British Official*

ALONG THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Our Military Critic, Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

WHEN I wrote a fortnight ago the general strategic situation of the Allies had clearly immensely improved, especially in the Mediterranean theatre. Since then not only has the improvement in the Mediterranean been well maintained, but it has spread to all other theatres of war. It is now evident that the Japanese defeat in the Solomons amounted to a naval disaster, and the plight of their land forces on Guadalcanal and in New Guinea reveals the dangers which threaten all their widely dispersed detachments once their air and naval strength is challenged.

In Russia, too, although the defenders of Stalingrad have still to face a critical period, there is clear evidence that the initiative is passing to the Red Army, and that the Germans are facing another winter in circumstances little, if at all, better than those of last year—particularly in the south where shelter and secure positions will be hard to find. The defeats they have suffered in the Caucasus give assurance that the Red Army and its leaders are capable of exploiting their opportunities, and that its offensive power is still formidable.

Perhaps the most encouraging aspect of the situation is that the Axis, during the coming winter, will have little chance of recuperation. Italy especially is bound to suffer from air attacks of a violence which no other country has yet experienced—even if she is not invaded. And the temporary respite from bombing Germany is enjoying, at the expense of her partner, will probably not last long. There is, of course, the practical certainty that in the near future a struggle for air supremacy over the central Mediterranean will develop on an unprecedented scale, and that there will be a concentration of U-boat warfare in the Mediterranean and at the approaches to the Straits of Gibraltar.

IN both instances the initial surprise effected in the invasion of French North Africa gave to the Allies advantages tantamount to winning the first round; and General Alexander's great victory will have far-reaching effects on the air situation. The Allies may have heavy losses of shipping and material while developing their initial successes, but there is no reason to fear that these will seriously cripple the enterprise—whereas the Axis losses may go far to undermine its capacity to retain its grip on conquered territory. The battles have, however, still to be won, and there is no justification for easy optimism or relaxation. The spirit in which General Montgomery has driven the 8th Army forward must be shared by all concerned in the War effort.

GEN. NOGUES (left), who was Resident-General in French Morocco, is here seen with Gen. Juin in Algiers after armistice terms had been signed between the latter and Gen. Eisenhower on Nov. 8, 1942. *Photo, Associated Press*

NORTH AFRICA The speed of the 8th Army's pursuit, in spite of rain and mud, has beaten all records, and the R.A.F. has kept pace—convincing proof of administrative foresight as well as of tactical drive in both Services.

Egypt has been cleared, and Cyrenaica, with its all-important airfields, is now once again in our hands. Rommel, writing off immense losses and exploiting the elusiveness of mechanized forces, has so far escaped with the remnants of his Afrika Korps. He has, no doubt, been able to replace some of his lost vehicles and other material from his former bases in Cyrenaica, but he is evidently desperately short of petrol, with little prospects of obtaining adequate fresh supplies. At the time I am writing, it seems probable that he will make a stand in his old defensive position at El Agheila; but I expect that his object will be to delay the advance of the 8th Army rather than risk decisive battle there. Defeat at El Agheila with its long line of communication to his Tripoli base would spell final disaster for him; whereas, if he can delay the final issue it would prevent a considerable part of the Allies' Middle East air forces from intervening in the air encounters in Tunisia which promise to be of paramount importance. It is possible that Rommel will continue his retreat to Tripoli leaving only rearguards at El Agheila in the hopes of either evacuating as much as possible of his Army from Tripoli, or of causing dispersion of the Allied armies in Tunisia by an attempt to join the Axis forces there.

I DOUBT, however, whether he has at the moment any clearly defined object beyond delaying the 8th Army's pursuit. He presumably expects that Montgomery, with his ever-lengthening line of communication and consequent supply difficulties, would not, without a pause, be able to develop the full strength required to overcome opposition.

The advance of the Allies into Tunisia has proceeded favourably and as fast as could be expected. Up to the time of writing, contact has been made only between strong reconnaissance groups, with the Allies gaining minor successes in the resulting clashes. There can be no certainty as to the strength of the forces the enemy has succeeded in landing, but the estimate of 10,000 men with few tanks may well be too low. A number of small ships as well as transport aircraft are apparently making the passage from Sicily, which might mean the presence of a force of considerable numbers, though probably one deficient in transport and heavy weapons.

FIELD MARSHAL ROMMEL (left) with Gen. Nehring. The latter was reported on Nov. 16, 1942, to have been appointed C.-in-C. of the Axis forces in Tunisia. *Photo, Associated Press*

SUCH a force might offer stubborn resistance in defence, although it would have little counter-attacking power or mobility. Owing to the shortage of petrol and few aerodromes it would probably have to depend for air support on aircraft based on Sicily or Sardinia. There is likely to be some hard fighting, for, although the Axis Powers can have little hope of retaining their footing in Tunisia for long, they may hope to gain time for the re-grouping of their armies. The more the Allies are compelled to expend their resources the greater will be the strain on their communications and the greater the exposure of their shipping to air and U-boat attack.

Evidently the battle for air supremacy may become of greater importance than that on

ALLIED THRUSTS IN LIBYA AND TUNISIA constitute a vast pincer movement directed against the Axis forces in French Tunisia and Italian Libya; its ultimate object may be seen as their complete ejection from North Africa. On this map arrows show the extent of our advance by Nov. 21, 1942. *By courtesy of The Times*

STALINGRAD AREA. By Nov. 23, 1942, the Russians had taken Kalach, 50 miles W. of Stalingrad, thus cutting the German link between the Volga and the Don.
By courtesy of The Daily Telegraph

land, and it seems likely to develop under conditions which have not yet occurred in this war. On other occasions, e.g. in the Battle of Britain, one side has definitely been on the defensive, but in the coming battle of the Mediterranean both sides will have great opportunities of exploiting both offensive and defensive action. Both can employ great concentrations of air power, and the main arena is highly centralized. Quality rather than numbers will be, I believe, the main factor in deciding the issue.

It must be realized, however, that the maintenance and expansion of Allied forces in North Africa implies a constant exposure of shipping to attack, and the risks may not be less than those incurred on the Axis communications with Libya. Fortunately Oran and, to a lesser extent, Algiers are ports outside the extreme danger zone of air attack and afford fairly safe bases connected with Tunisia by good railway and road communications. To reach them, however, ships will run the gauntlet of concentrated U-boat attack till that menace is brought under control—a process which Admiral Cunningham encourages us to believe is well in hand.

RUSSIA Stalingrad has still to pass through a critical period, because till December the Volga will not be frozen sufficiently to bear traffic and in the meantime ice-floes prevent the passage of boats. Supplies and reinforcements therefore cannot reach the city. During the recent lull in the fighting it is, however, believed that substantial reinforcements were thrown in. Certainly the garrison has been meeting German attacks, both large and small, with great success, and has recovered some lost ground. The enemy's air attacks have been on a greatly reduced scale, probably in part owing to transfers to other fronts, in part to landing-grounds having been put out of service by the weather. Though Stalingrad may still be in danger the prospects of the Germans, if they fail to capture the city, are rapidly deteriorating. Winter has set in, and without shelter and with precarious communications the enemy is not to be envied.

In the Caucasus the Russian position has immensely improved. The German drive through Nalchik towards Ordzhonikidze, which looked so threatening, has not merely been checked but has met with a major defeat, involving apparently the destruction of at least one Panzer division, a number of other units, and much transport. The Russian counter-stroke was evidently made with much skill and determination, but equal credit may be due to the troops which, by stubborn rearguard actions, delayed the German advance until the weather finally brought it to a standstill and made it impossible to maintain petrol supplies. The victory deprives the Germans of all hopes of reaching the Grozny oilfields this year, and leaves them without an organized winter position and with indifferent communications.

In the Western Caucasus there seems little prospect of the Germans reaching Tuapse. Russian counter-attacks have been vigorous and effective, and though the Germans have not suffered a major reverse they have been compelled to adopt a defensive attitude in a terrain unsuitable for winter occupation. They have, moreover, notably failed to eliminate the Black Sea Fleet, and are therefore unlikely to be able to make much use of sea communications to relieve their supply difficulties.

Their great offensive would appear to have brought them not a drop of additional oil, for the Grozny field has not been reached, and the Maikop wells, according to reliable reports, are likely to be out of production till well into next year.

Indications from both German and Russian sources are that Stalin intends to launch another winter offensive and, judging from the amazing resilience of the Caucasus army, which at one time seemed to be in a shattered condition and cut off from supplies and reinforcements, the Germans are justified in feeling apprehensive that the Red Army is still capable of striking hard.

On the whole, great as its achievements have been and alarming as its progress was, the German offensive has practically everywhere failed to reap the fruits of success. It has inflicted much damage on Russia, but has notably failed to improve the strategic or economic situation of the Axis.

'OLD GLORY' ARMLET

ALL the American troops who landed in French North Africa on Nov. 8, 1942, wore "Old Glory" armbands which had been manufactured in London with swift secrecy.

Working in cooperation with H.M. Stationery Office, the American Army Services of Supply arranged contracts with well-known London printing firms. Only a few days remained before the mighty armada was to sail for Algeria and Morocco. When the brassards and decalcomanias (transfers from which replicas of the Stars and Stripes could be placed on aircraft and vehicles) were received they were scarcely dry enough for handling. Nevertheless, they were rushed immediately by courier to the embarkation ports from which the crowded transports were shortly to leave. Speed-boats carried the final delivery of armbands to ships which were already under way for N. Africa.

★ I HAD written the above paragraphs before the B.B.C. announced on Sunday evening, Nov. 22, the Russian offensive which has begun with such astounding success. I prefer not to attempt to revise what I had written, for I believe it was then a fair picture of the situation when the counter-offensive was launched. It is evident that Stalin has timed the offensive not only to save Stalingrad at a critical moment, but also to take full advantage of the dislocation of German dispositions caused by the situation in the Mediterranean. It would be premature to estimate the probable effects of the counter-offensive, but evidently we are on the eve of a new phase in the war. It may, however, confidently be assumed that Stalingrad is now safe, and that the army which threatened it is facing the possibility of crushing disaster. I have in previous articles emphasized the precarious nature of its communications, especially under winter conditions, and it would seem that they have now been cut by the capture of Kalach.

It is probable that the Russian offensive will not be limited to the Stalingrad front. The whole of the German army used in their great offensive may stand in danger, and the armies investing Leningrad are also in no secure position. Much is likely to happen in the next fortnight. We may be sure that the Germans will fight with the fierceness of rats in a trap, but meanwhile it may be noticed that for the first time the Russians have announced the capture of a large number of prisoners. This makes it improbable that the break-through became possible because the Germans, having warnings of the coming blow, had already commenced the withdrawal whilst continuing minor attacks on the city to conceal their intentions.

FAR EAST In the naval engagements which began on the night of Nov. 13–14, and continued for several days, the Americans won a notable victory which is likely to have far-reaching results. Its immediate effect is to make their hold on Guadalcanal secure, and this will probably mean the liquidation of the Japanese troops in the island.

A remarkable feature of the encounter was the non-participation of any Japanese aircraft-carriers despite the fact that some of their capital ships were engaged and that their shore-based aircraft had already proved incapable of providing an adequate umbrella. This must be a clear indication that Japan now finds herself short of a type of ship on which she had placed special reliance, and which is essential to the conduct of any amphibious operation carried out beyond the range of shore-based fighter aircraft. Her offensive capacity is in consequence immensely reduced, and her capacity to protect her sea communications from air attack is also affected. Presumably she is husbanding her remaining carriers for cooperation with her main fleet should it be brought to battle.

IN New Guinea the advance of the Australians across the Owen Stanley Mountains was a remarkable feat; and now that an American force has appeared to cooperate, there are good prospects that the Japanese base at Buna will be captured. The appearance of the American force evidently came as a surprise to the Japanese, and we have not yet been told where it assembled or how it reached its assembly position. Part of it seems to have been transported by air. The Japanese are fighting hard in defence of their bridgehead positions, and have the advantage of possessing artillery, whereas the attackers depend on mortars and machine-guns owing to lack of roads for vehicles. It is clear that the Japanese feel their position critical, for they brought up destroyers in an attempt either to land reinforcements or to evacuate their troops. The attempt failed, and cost them some destroyers from air attack.

The operations here and in the Solomons tend to show up the essential weakness of the dispersed Japanese detachments depending on long lines of sea communication. It is more than evident that control of sea communications by sea and air power is the vital factor in the Far Eastern situation. This can only be gained by a step-by-step process, but the first steps have been taken and the pauses between steps are likely to become shorter.

NEW GUINEA FRONT. It was announced on Nov. 24, 1942, that Australian forces had entered Gona, 12 miles from Buna. At the latter place U.S. troops were closing in on the Jap defenders. *By courtesy of The Time.*

Up the African Beaches Goes 'Old Glory'

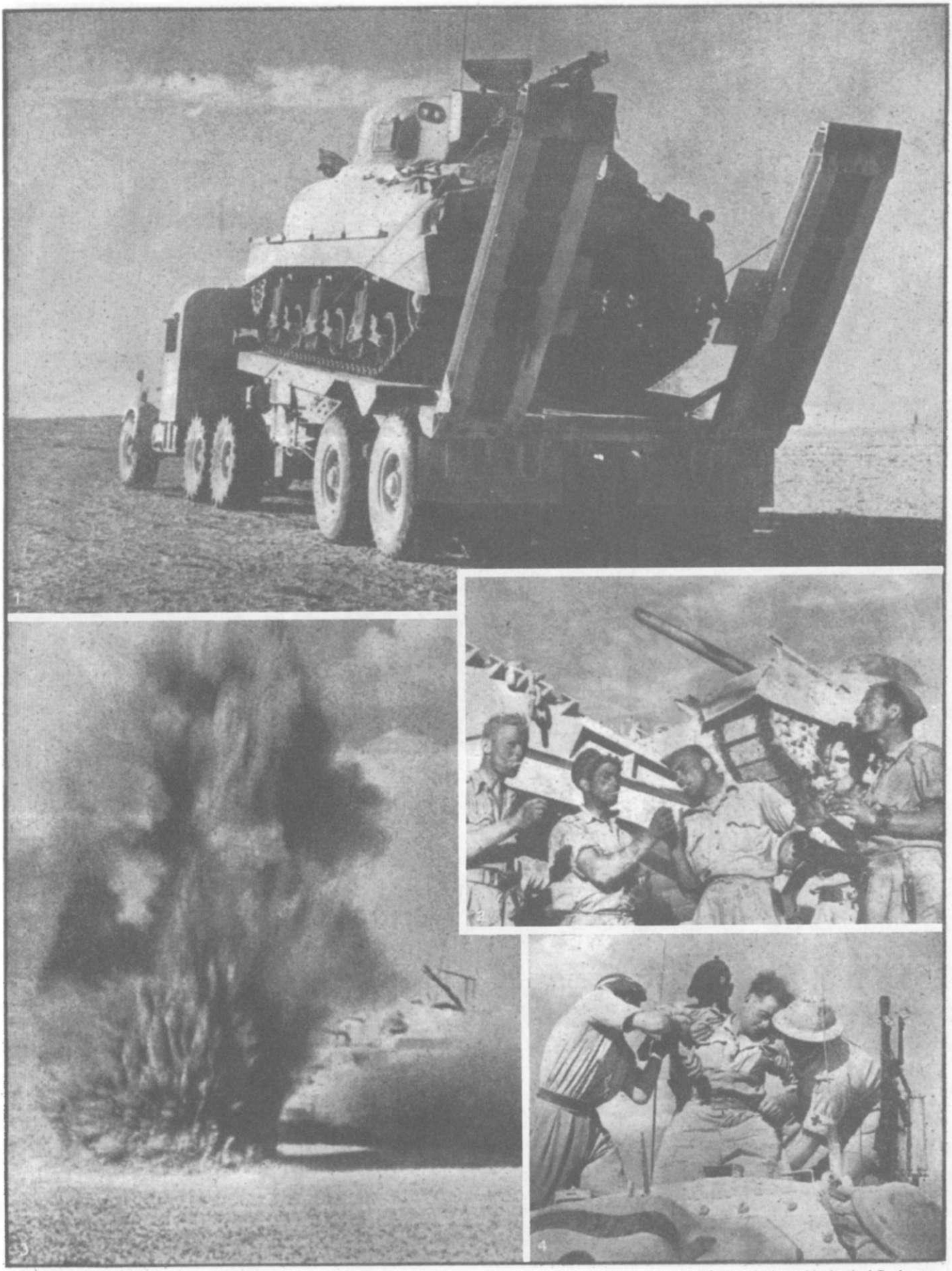
ALLIED OFFENSIVE IN N. AFRICA. 1, Flying the Stars and Stripes, U.S. troops land at Surcouf, a small village 14 miles E. of Algiers. 2, Maj.-Gen. Lloyd R. Fredendall, U.S. commander of the Allied forces which captured Oran on Nov. 10, 1942. 3, German members of the Armistice Commission arrested at Fedala, Morocco, on their way to an internment camp under armed guard. 4, In Algiers about 200 Italians belonging to the Commission ran the gauntlet of jeering crowds as they were driven away in U.S. trucks. *Photos, British Official; Associated Press, Planet News*

Triumphant Progress for the Allied 'Invaders'

CAPTURE OF AIRFIELD AT ALGIERS. The important Maison Blanche aerodrome was occupied on Nov. 8, 1942, soon after the landing of Allied forces. 1, Headed by "Old Glory," American troops march towards the objective. 2, Men of the R.A.F. Regiment on their way to take part in the capture. 3, Maj.-Gen. C. W. Ryder who commanded the assault forces at Algiers. 4, R.A.F. ground crews seen after the occupation of the aerodrome which was almost at once taken over by Allied fighter squadrons.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Topical Press, Associated Press

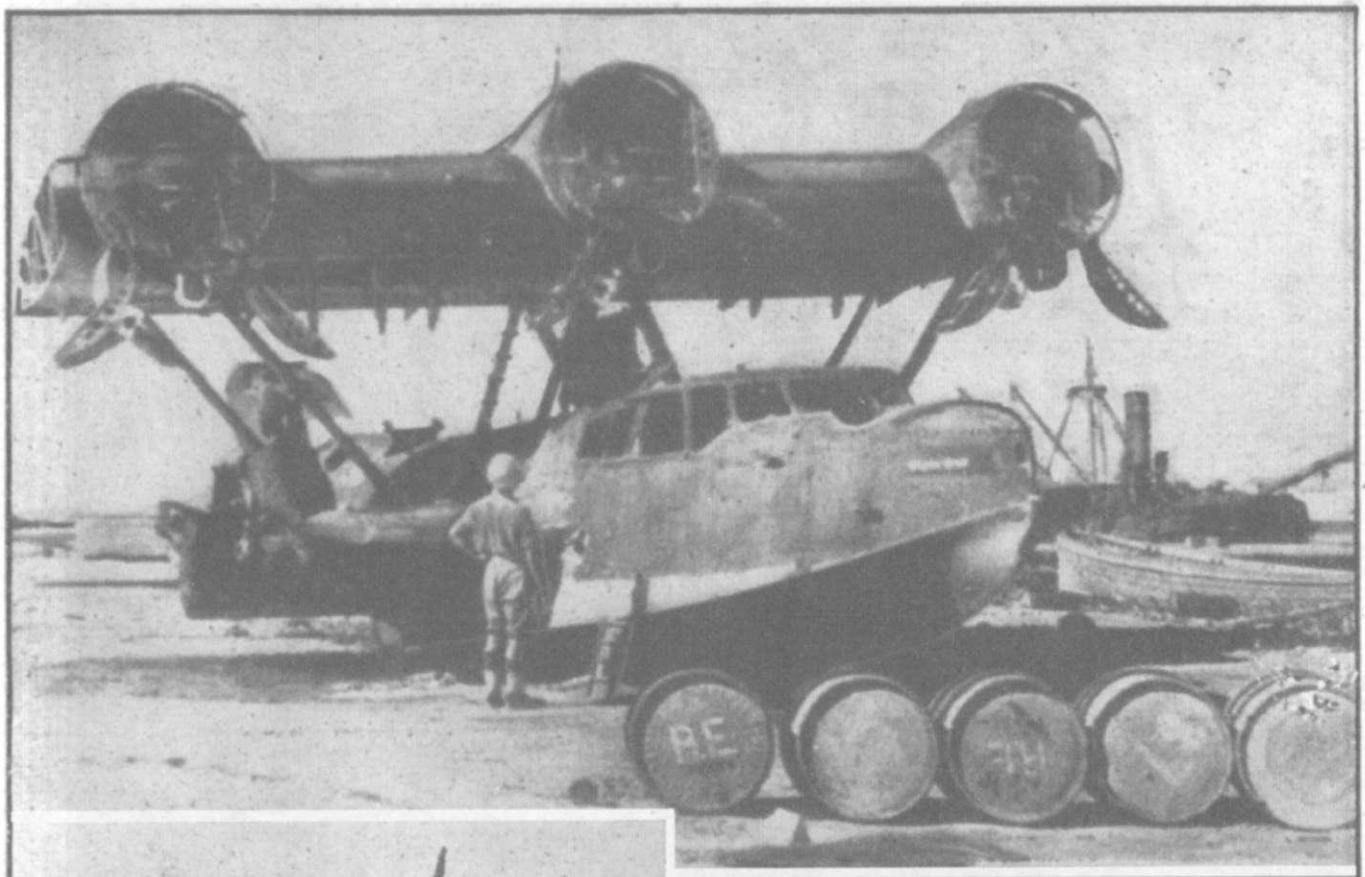
To the Rescue of Wounded Men and Machines



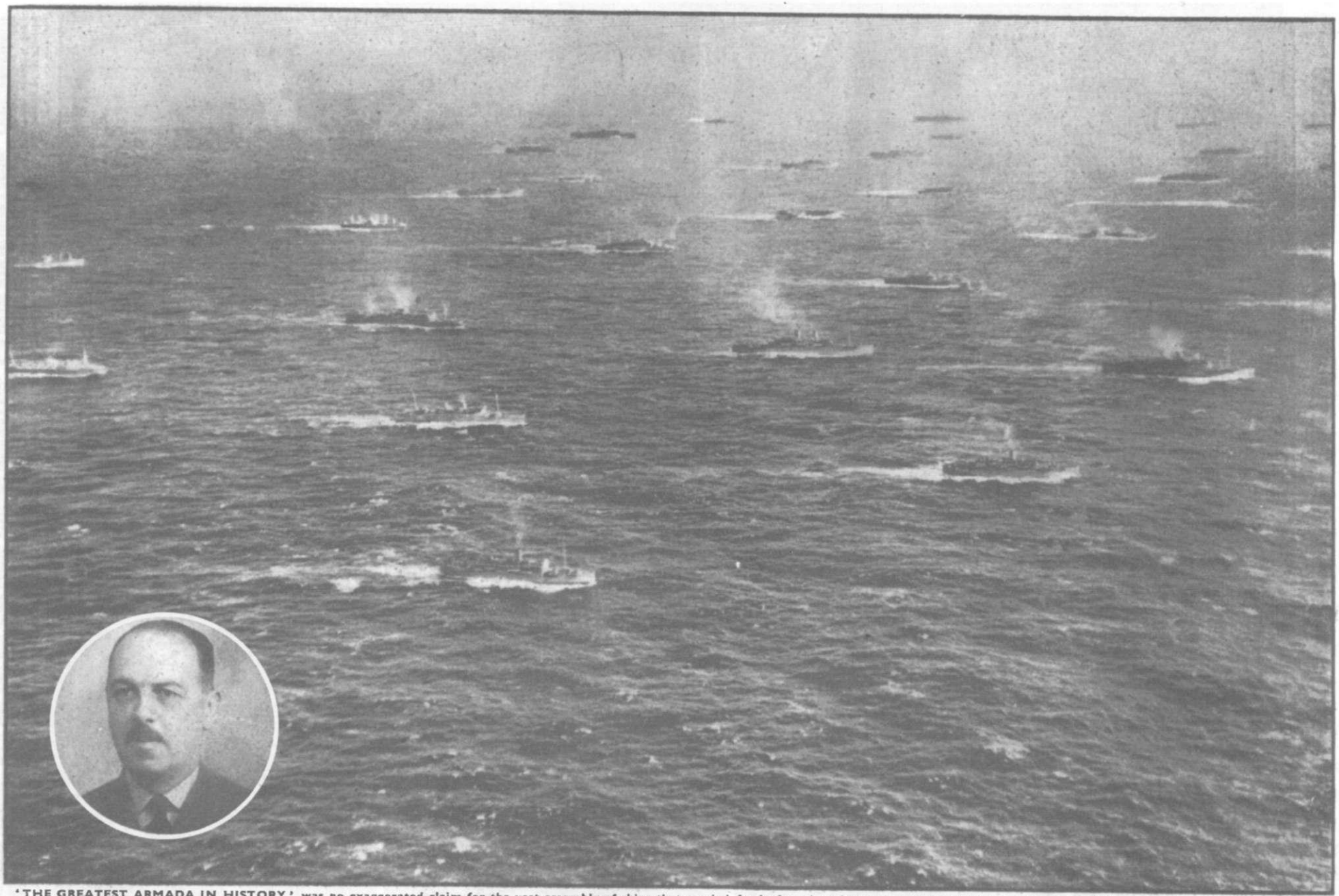
WITH THE TANKS in the Battle of Egypt. 1, Transporter belonging to the tank recovery section of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Corps carries a damaged Sherman tank from the battlefield to the repair-shop. 2, R.E.M.E. crew pause for a welcome smoke while a dogfight rages overhead. 3, Heavy British tank narrowly escapes destruction by a near miss. 4, Ambulance men gently lift a wounded member of a tank crew through the turret.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; British Newsreels

'Clearing-Up' in the Eighth Army's Wake



AIR ONSLAUGHT ON ROMMEL. 1, Our bombers attacked Mersa Matruh harbour by day and night, and on Nov. 8, 1942, the 8th Army entered the town. A German seaplane which crashed on the quay is seen in the foreground. 2, An Allied fighter photographed near the wreck of a Messerschmitt 110 on a captured enemy landing-field in the desert. 3, Air Chief Marshal Sir A. Tedder, G.C.B., A.O.C.-in-C., Middle East, visits a long-range fighter squadron. He is seen (left) with Wing Comdr. Bragg, the squadron's C.O. 4, A ground crew servicing a fighter. *Photos, British Official*



'THE GREATEST ARMADA IN HISTORY' was no exaggerated claim for the vast assembly of ships that carried Anglo-American forces to French N. Africa. There were 850 vessels, 500 being in convoy, and as many as 350 warships escorting the expedition. Ahead of schedule the Royal Navy landed thousands of men off Algiers and Oran (more than 200 miles apart) at the same time on Nov. 8, 1942. Here is a section of the enormous convoy, seen from one of the R.A.F. Coastal Command aircraft that formed a unit in the protecting air umbrella. Air Vice-Marshal Douglas Colyer (inset) was responsible for this great air operation, in the course of which the R.A.F. flew over 1,000,000 miles and 8,000 flying hours.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Bassano

THE WAR AT SEA

by Francis E. McMurtrie

IN a series of closely contested actions, mostly fought at night, the United States naval forces in the Solomon Islands area, under the command of Vice-Admiral W. F. Halsey, inflicted a severe defeat on the Japanese Navy on Nov. 13–15, 1942.

Though full details have (at the time of writing, some three weeks ahead of publication date) yet to be received, it is evident that the enemy, having failed in previous attempts to dislodge U.S. Marines from the island of Guadalcanal with its important airfield, assembled an exceptionally heavy force in the expectation of crushing all opposition. The core of the attacking fleet is reported to have been formed by the battleships Kongo, Haruna, Hiei and Kirisima, which are the oldest in the Japanese Navy, having been launched in 1912-13. They had been extensively modernized, the armoured decks being thickened as a protection against attack from the air. Mounting a main armament of eight 14-in. guns on a displacement of 29,330 tons, and steaming at 26 knots, they made quite formidable opponents.

In the earlier stages of the fighting the heaviest American ships engaged were heavy cruisers of 10,000 tons, armed with 8-in. guns. In spite of the odds against them, these seem to have stood up well to their more powerful opponents, though two U.S. flag officers (Rear-Admirals Norman Scott and D. J. Callaghan) lost their lives. In the concluding part of the action, Admiral Halsey threw his own battleships into the struggle. Their presence appears to have been unsuspected by the enemy, and thus the American victory was ensured.

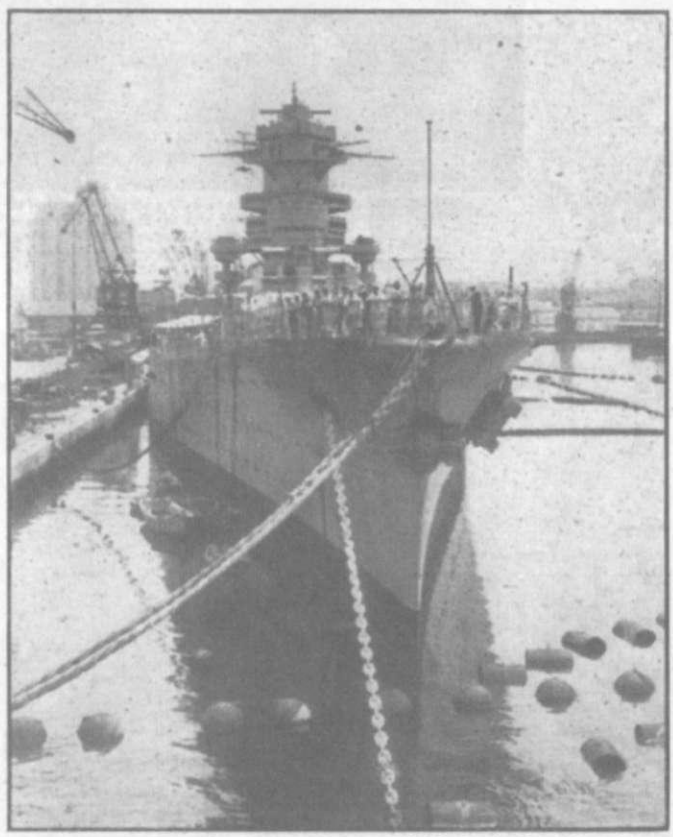
ALTOGETHER the Japanese lost in this action two battleships (one of which may actually have been a heavy cruiser, perhaps one of the new vessels of the "pocket battleship" type), eight cruisers, six destroyers, eight troop transports and four cargo vessels carrying stores and munitions. No effective aid appears to have been rendered to the Japanese military forces in Guadalcanal, who are now very hard pressed by their adversaries. It is reckoned that some 20,000 or more Japanese sailors and soldiers must have been drowned in this vain attempt to dislodge the Guadalcanal Marine garrison.

American losses were comparatively light, considering the importance of the success gained. They amounted to two cruisers and seven destroyers sunk. No aircraft-carriers appear to have taken part in the action, both sides having lost so heavily in this category that they are naturally unwilling to risk the few precious survivors.

In its effects, this battle is clearly of much greater significance than the Japanese defeat off Midway Island in June. With Guadalcanal firmly in American hands, the Japanese invaders of New Guinea in desperate straits, and the time factor operating against them, our Oriental enemies have sustained the heaviest shock that has yet been administered to their sea power, upon which all else depends. To replace in full their naval losses is beyond the capacity of Japanese shipyards, while the United States Navy is adding daily to its strength. Short of another and even more desperate attempt to retrieve the position by throwing in forces hitherto kept in reserve, it is difficult to forecast the enemy's next move. It would be in keeping with the Japanese character to strike a fresh blow in quite a different direction ; but the possibility of this will naturally have been taken into account by the Allied commanders, and preparations made accordingly.

UP to the conclusion of the landings the Allied invasion of French North Africa was entirely a naval operation, organized in advance so far as the British part of it was concerned by the same flag officer who conducted the famous Dunkirk evacuation in 1940—Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay. Allied naval forces employed, numbering over 350 warships, were under the chief command of Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, former Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, and more recently Head of the British Admiralty Delegation in Washington.

It was the Navy's task to ensure the safe arrival at the appointed hour, at the various landing points, of some 500 ships of varying tonnages and speeds, ranging from large liners to trawlers and tugs. Over 3,000 miles had to be traversed by some of the ships, with the possibility of submarine attack ever in view. Never before in history has a seaborne expedition been successfully launched so far from its starting points without advance bases being provided.



JEAN BART, French battleship which was left blazing in Casablanca harbour on Nov. 10, 1942, as the result of resistance by French ships to U.S. naval forces. Belonging to the Richelieu class, she had a displacement of 35,000 tons and carried a complement of 1,670.
Photo, Associated Press

REAR-AD. D. J. CALLAGHAN, whose death during a fierce night action in the Solomons was announced on Nov. 17, 1942. Admiral Callaghan commanded U.S. cruiser San Francisco at Pearl Harbour last December, and later took her to the S. Pacific.
Photo, Associated Press

Three main forces had to be landed : one in French Morocco, around Casablanca, under the immediate escort of American warships under Rear-Admiral H. K. Hewitt, U.S.N. ; one at Algiers, under Rear-Admiral Sir Harold Burrough ; and the third at Oran and neighbouring ports, under Commodore T. H. Troubridge, R.N. At all these points troops were landed at 1 a.m. on Nov. 8.

Obviously, the success of these operations was dependent on a high standard of navigation and the skilful handling of the large number of ships concerned, as well as on perfect understanding between all the units engaged, so as to obviate any unnecessary signalling which would have given warning of approach. That every ship should have disembarked its assault troops punctually, except one that was damaged by torpedo and thus delayed slightly, is the most eloquent tribute that could be paid to the efficiency of the Allied Navies and the merchant shipping under their guidance.

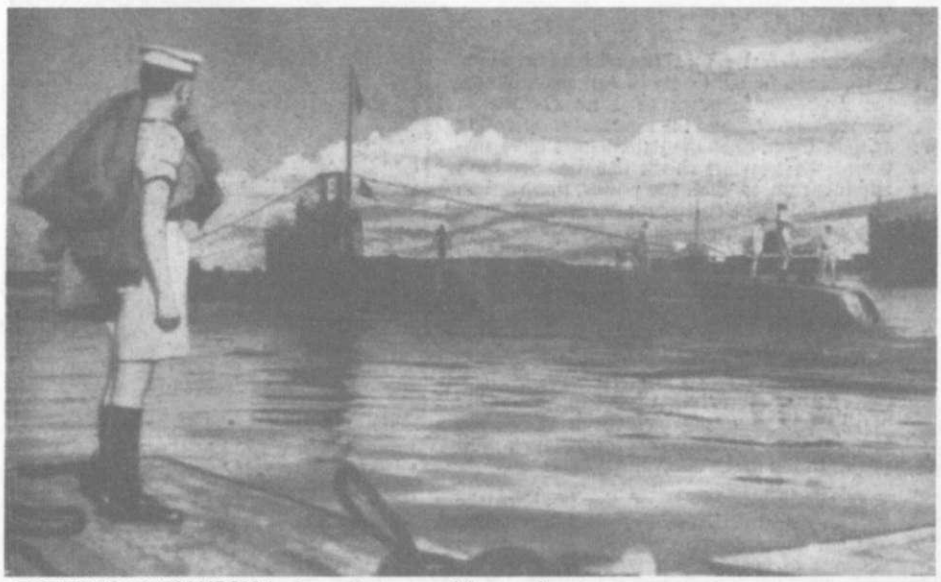
BRITISH capital ships and aircraft-carriers, under the command of Vice-Admiral Sir Neville Syfret, with Rear-Admiral Lyster in charge of the carriers, covered the Mediterranean landings ; and U.S. capital ships under Rear-Admiral Robert Giffen performed a similar function at Casablanca. Only at the last-named port was there any formidable French naval opposition. This came chiefly from the half-completed French battleship Jean Bart, of 35,000 tons, mounting three 15-in. guns. Shells from the 16-in. guns of the American battleships set her on fire, and her discomfiture was completed by torpedoes from naval aircraft. Now the Jean Bart is a battered wreck, lying half-waterlogged in the naval harbour. Some smaller French warships, mostly destroyers, were sunk or forced to beach themselves, the only vessels to escape being submarines.

At Oran, though two British sloops (former U.S. Coast Guard cutters) were lost, a French destroyer and two torpedo boats were driven ashore, another destroyer and a submarine scuttled, and a second submarine escaped to Toulon. Two other submarines are stated by Vichy to be missing.

Practically all the resistance came from the French Navy, who were also in control of coastal batteries which had to be silenced.

As an impressive illustration of the influence of sea power on the course of a war, the expedition to N. Africa can hardly be paralleled.

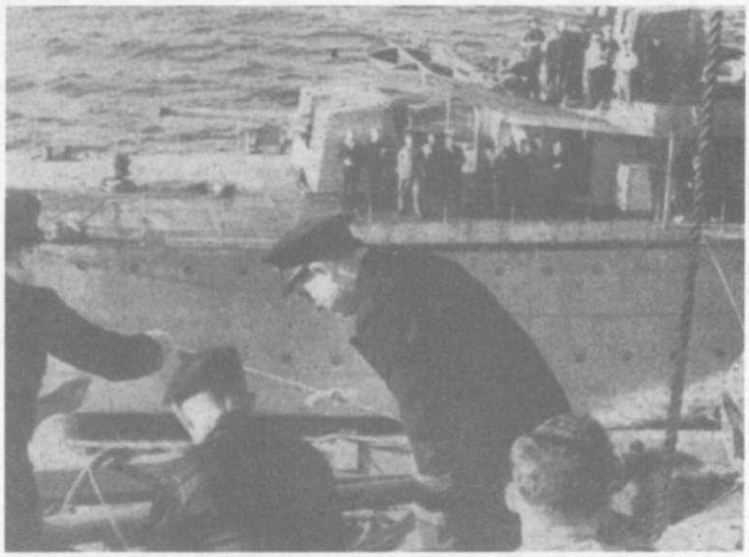
Navy's Work in the Mediterranean



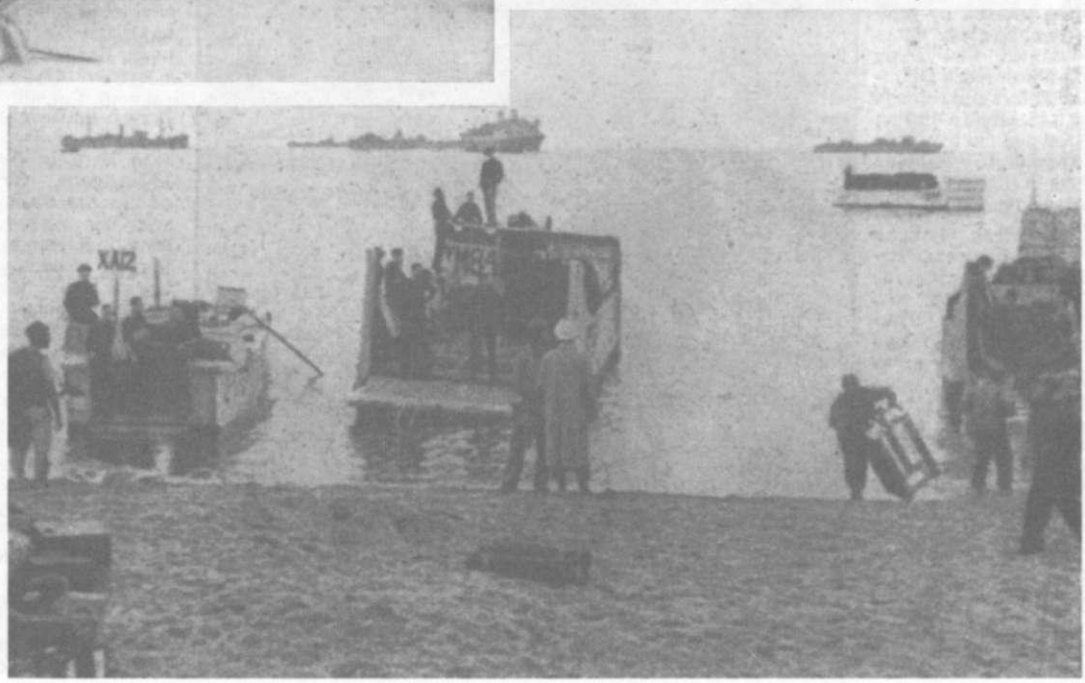
ENTERING ALEXANDRIA harbour after successful operations in the Mediterranean, this British submarine flies the "Jolly Roger" as a sign that she has sent an enemy ship to the bottom. She is greeted by a "postman" with letters from home.

ADM. SIR A. CUNNINGHAM, G.C.B., D.S.O., Naval C.-in-C, Allied Expeditionary Force, which covered the Allied landings in N. Africa in November, 1942.

ADM. SIR B. RAMSAY, K.C.B. (above), made the preliminary plans for the vast seaborne expedition to French N. Africa. After 40 years in the Navy he was placed on the retired list in 1938, but in June 1940 it was stated that he had planned and directed the evacuation from Dunkirk. Now his work has been highly praised by Gen. Eisenhower. Sir Bertram Ramsay is 59.



The task of convoying some 500 ships to N. Africa was brilliantly performed by the Royal Navy. A destroyer comes alongside to receive the Admiral's final instructions. The message is passed by line from ship to ship.



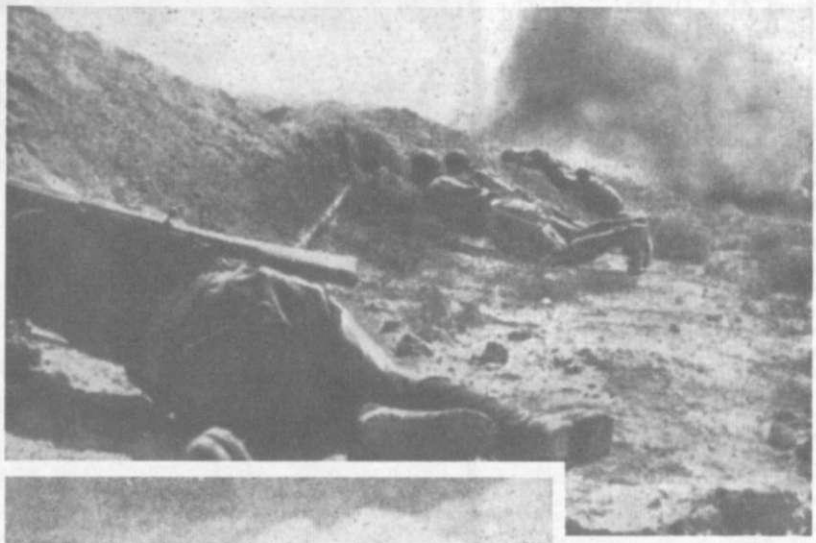
AMERICAN RANGERS carried out the U.S. Army's first operational engagement in the occupation of N. Africa. Supported by the R.A.F. and the Royal Navy, the Rangers landed at strategic points on the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts of Morocco and Algeria. Right, landing-craft at a beach W. of Oran. This French naval base was occupied on Nov. 10.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Keystone, News Chronicle

The Battle of Alamein as the Axis Saw It

Taken by Axis cameramen, the photos in this page show scenes behind Rommel's lines at the beginning of the Battle of Egypt, when the 8th Army penetrated his main position in the El Alamein sector on Oct. 24, 1942. Right, German patrol seeks cover as a British shell bursts just ahead.

Reports of the progress of the El Alamein battle were hardly calculated to cheer Rommel, who is seen below, standing with folded arms, in glum converse with some of his Italian allies. A captured S.A. fighter pilot who saw the German commander and later escaped, described him as "a red-faced man with a jutting jaw and a look of sheer arrogance, almost truculence."



Axis troops suffered the full fury of a combined land and air assault. Enemy lines of communication were strafed unremittingly by day and night, and so effective was our air superiority that the Germans were deprived of the Luftwaffe's protection. Above, Axis soldiers crouch under a ridge as they seek shelter during a fierce phase of the tremendous battle.

Italian tanks on the edge of the Qattara Depression move towards the battle (left). The retreating Germans abandoned the Italians to their fate, and thousands of the latter gave themselves up as our prisoners. The enemy description of this photo reads: "Germany and Italy have drawn still closer to each other in their struggle for living space and freedom."

Photos, Keystone, G.P.U.

Tunisia, the Key Country of North Africa

This brief account of the more interesting historical and topographical facts about Tunisia, which has suddenly become the centre of the struggle for the Allied command of the North African shores, has been expressly written for this publication by M. HENRY D. DAVRAY, the eminent French publicist, who has had much personal experience of that enchanting land.

THE British and American troops now fighting the Axis forces in Tunisia find the country greatly different from that which the French Zouaves and Spahis—foot and horse—first entered in 1880. They had crossed the Algerian border to put an end to the forays of the Kroumir tribes then overrunning their neighbours after the harvest, robbing them of their grain and their cattle. The Bey of Tunis was utterly unable to impose his authority on the highland chieftains; he had borrowed money from France, Britain and Italy, and was no more in a position to pay the interest than to refund the loans, his whole country being in a complete state of anarchy.

The chief of the French Government was then Jules Ferry, a real statesman with broad views. He deemed the time ripe to put the Bey's house in order, the incessant raids of the Kroumirs providing an excellent pretext. After a short campaign the Berber tribes submitted and a treaty was signed with the Bey at his Bardo Palace, a few miles from Tunis. He accepted the French Protectorate, but remained the "Sovereign and Owner" of the Regency of Tunis, such being the designation of the country.

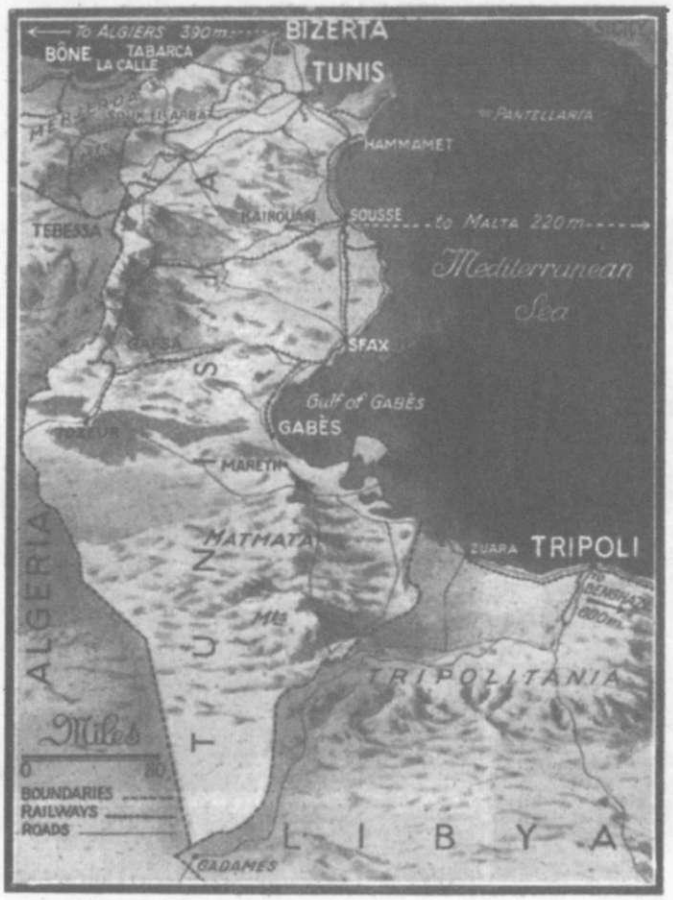
The first Resident-General was M. Paul Cambon, who was later to become Ambassador of the French Republic to the Court of St. James's and remain in London for twenty-two years, playing an important part in effecting the Entente Cordiale. In Tunis he did excellent work, comparable with Lord Cromer's in Egypt. M. Cambon entirely reorganized the Bey's administration, over which he superimposed French officials. The working of the reorganized Treasury was so efficient, and the prosperity of the country developed so rapidly, that within a few years the Resident-General could refund the foreign loans, beginning with the Italians in order to allay their blatant requests. Henceforward, the budget was balanced and remained so even during the four years of the First Great War.

The Regency being a Protectorate, with the Bey as its own "Sovereign and Owner," the electorate has never sent representatives to the Paris Parliament, unlike Algeria, which is administratively incorporated into France, and depends on the Ministry of the Interior. In Tunis the Resident-General and his French staff have been appointed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

ALTHOUGH agriculture is highly developed in French North Africa, there is practically no heavy industry in spite of the fact that the subsoil is rich in many deposits. Iron, for instance, is to be found all along the mountainous chain that runs from the Atlantic to Bizerta, and specially in Algiers. But those Algerian deposits are not exploited, although enough iron ore could be extracted for smelting steel and casting guns and shells for a hundred years' war or for the more desirable implements of peace. All this mineral wealth remains unused. Why? Because the concessions were granted to companies formed by the same people who own the rich mines of Lorraine, and who, anxious to avoid competition, were clever enough to exclude from their agreement a clause compelling them to work their mines.

In Tunisia, however, M. Cambon was not caught napping, and when deposits were discovered in the Regency he imposed on the concessionaires the same "articles and conditions" as they have to accept in Australia. So the phosphate and iron mines in Tunis have been properly worked. Needless to say, there was no fear that the zinc and manganese deposits would remain unexploited. As it is, the immense phosphate deposits of Metlaoui and of Redeyef yield annually about twenty million tons, which are carried by two railway lines to the ports of Sfax and Sousse; these have modern equipment for loading, surpassed only by Casablanca, for the Kourighat phosphates of Morocco. In the valleys of the north, between the well-wooded slopes of the hills and mountains, there are very fertile wheat land and vineyards; the plains of the south, which were bare desert sixty years ago, are now covered by immense plantations of olive trees that expand fan-like, specially around Sousse and Sfax. They number more than 18 millions.

One gets an idea of the increase of value of the desert when one knows that an acre of bare land can be secured for five francs and, fifteen years after, when the trees bear an average crop, the same piece of land changes hands for four hundred francs.



TUNISIA, now invaded by the British First Army and by Axis forces under Gen. Nehring, is rather smaller than England. The west side is flanked by the Algerian mountains; the east coast is flat. Bizerta and Tunis are northern keypoints. From Gabes, terminus of an electric railway, a coastal road runs S.E. towards Tripoli.

Specially drawn for THE WAR ILLUSTRATED *by Félix Gardon*

The population of Tunisia is prosperous. There are two million Moslems, Arabs and Berbers, mostly attached to the soil that provides them with ample resources. The Jews number 52,000, living in the towns mostly, and the majority have acquired French nationality. Europeans, chiefly French and Italians, including a good many Maltese, number 200,000; and, whatever the Fascist propaganda may brag, the majority of these are French. One must admit that the Italians follow near, but quality is not on their side. The Italian colony is composed largely of a rabble of street-porters, dock-hands, unskilled labourers who live in conditions inferior even to the poorest natives. It is certainly not to them that the economic development and the increase of land values in Tunisia are due.

WHEN the French troops invaded Tunis in 1880 there were neither roads nor railways, only tracks and trails. The only metalled road they found was four miles long and connected the Bardo Palace to the capital; it had been finished only the year before. The Bey Mohammed es Sadok had visited the Paris Exhibition in 1878, where he bought a gorgeous horse-carriage. When he took delivery of it there was nowhere to drive it; so he had a road made for the purpose! Now a network of over 2,000 miles of metalled roads connects the various towns and regions of the Regency; and over sixteen hundred miles of broad-gauge railways have been built, linking up with the Algerian system and farther on with the Moroccan railways, so that it is now possible to travel by rail all the way from Gabes to Marrakesh.

At first, all commercial exchange had to be carried by sea, and there were no ports. The French dug a deep canal through the Tunis lagoon giving access to ships of big tonnage to the quays of La Goulette. The eastern coast is formed of bottom reefs to a distance of several miles out at sea, making navigation in territorial waters often impossible and always difficult and dangerous; however, two clear passages allow access to the ports of Sousse and Sfax, which are among the best-equipped in the world. As to Bizerta, it is the finest harbour of North Africa, and one of the best sheltered. It is a very strong naval base, and is also well-equipped as a commercial port.

After Rome destroyed Carthage in 146 B.C. the province of Africa, as the country was now called, thrived under the "Pax Romana," and it has since known many invasions: the Vandals devastated it; several successive hordes of Arabs swarmed over it with fire and sword; the French king Saint Louis died besieging Tunis in 1270, and then in the second half of the 16th century the Turks conquered it. Now for more than half a century the Regency has thrived under the "Pax Gallica." Let us hope that the Nazis, those modern Vandals, will soon be expelled before they can bring devastation to this fair and not unprosperous land.

For These Allies and Axis Are Now At Grips

NORTHERN TUNISIA is of immense strategical importance in the Allied drive for the control of the Mediterranean. There are good road and rail communications with Algeria, and well-equipped military aerodromes at Bizerta and Tunis. Grouped round these centres are many other valuable landing-grounds. Southern Tunisia is the crucial region in the campaign against Tripolitania. The main obstacles on the road to Tripoli are the crossing of the Tunisian desert and the passage through the Mareth Line (built during the late 'thirties when an Italian invasion seemed imminent). 1, A modern house in the oasis of Gabès in Southern Tunisia. 2, A view of Sfax ; the large building on the right is the town-hall. (*See* maps pp. 396 and 407.)

BIZERTA AND TUNIS, principal port and capital of Tunisia, are situated in the N.E. corner of the country. 3, Quayside and harbour of the great naval base of Bizerta ; only 150 miles from Sicily, it has a population of 25,000, and the largest warships can enter the inner basin. 4, General view of Tunis showing the harbour in the background. A well-planned modern city, it lies about 145 miles from Sicily, and some 250 miles from the British island of Malta.

Photos, Press Topics, Associated Press, P. G. Luck

How They Prepared to Invade North Africa

In a congratulatory message to General Eisenhower, the Allied C.-in-C. in North Africa, Lord Louis Mountbatten, Chief of (British) Combined Operations, referred to it as "the greatest combined operation of all times." Some conception, albeit necessarily inadequate, of the preparations involved may be had from what follows.

SHORTLY before Christmas 1941, when the Japanese onslaught on Pearl Harbour was still a recent and exceedingly painful memory, President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill sat down in Washington to discuss the desirability and possibility of an offensive against the Axis. Various offensives were discussed (revealed the President a year later, at his Press conference on Nov. 11), especially a large frontal attack from England across the Channel. Expert military and naval opinion was that this would be feasible, and a good deal of preliminary work was done with this offensive in view. "But the more it was studied the more it became apparent that because of physical limitations such an offensive could not be carried out with a reasonable chance of success in 1942."

Some months passed; and by the early summer, in May and June 1942, the question of an offensive was viewed in a somewhat different light. Now the issue lay between a large-scale offensive about the middle of 1943 and one on a smaller scale in 1942. All the possibilities of this small limited offensive were surveyed, and by the end of June an Allied offensive had been agreed upon. At the end of July the fundamental questions—the points of attack, the numbers of men involved, the shipping problem and the production problem—had all been surveyed. Thus it was that when a little later people were beginning to talk about a "second front," this second front, in the shape of a descent on French North Africa, had already been determined upon by the two Governments.

In July Gen. Marshall, head of the U.S. Army, came to London with Admiral King, C.-in-C. of the U.S. Navy, and had consultations with Mr. Churchill; and the decision to "hold the enemy on the French shore and strike at his southern flank in the Mediterranean through North Africa," to quote Mr. Churchill's words, was taken with the full concurrence of the War Cabinet and the staffs. By the end of August the approximate date of the attack had been decided. "So for several months," remarked the President, "Mr. Churchill and I had to listen with a smile—or shall I say, had to 'take it on the chin.'"

But to use the President's homely simile, a "tailor-made offensive cannot be purchased in a department store." An offensive which was not planned properly *might* succeed, given lots of luck; but since hundreds of thousands of lives were involved, it was imperative that there should be a great deal of study, co-ordination and preparation of all kinds.

TROOPS were available in Britain and America, but they had to be trained for a particular kind of offensive action. The crews of naval carrier-borne aircraft had to learn the art of cooperation with the Army as well as with the Navy. Communications, too, had to be worked out to the last detail. Hundreds of warships, transports and supply ships had to be made available and assembled with the minimum interference with the passage of the normal convoys. Ships had to be fitted out to carry landing-craft, men, fuel for the landing-craft, ammunition, cased petrol for quick transport to captured landing-grounds for the air forces, and even coal to enable the North African railways to be put into immediate commission in the Allied service.

THERE had to be rehearsals, and these had to be conducted with the greatest secrecy; where they were held is even now not disclosed. The enemy was kept guessing; indeed, it may be said that there have been few war secrets so well kept as this. Now we can see why it was decided not to publish our shipping losses. The Germans and Italians were deceived by their own lies; according to their own account they had sunk so many British and American ships that it would be quite impossible for the Allies to mount so huge an expedition.

U.S. TROOPS IN N. AFRICA make friendly contact with the inhabitants. As told in this page, the majority of Algerians and Moroccans ardently wished to cooperate with Britain and America, and thus to remain free from Axis domination. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

WHILE these operations, so vast and so varied, were afoot, a secret mission was sent to North Africa to prepare the way for the invading host, so that the expedition should meet with the minimum of resistance and the maximum of welcome and support. Highly dramatic were the circumstances; in fact, the story of the mission as told from Allied H.Q. in North Africa on Nov. 12 reads like the plot of an Oppenheim thriller.

The Anglo-Americans, said Gen. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in North Africa, knew full well that the vast majority in French North Africa was anxious to avoid Nazi domination and eager to cooperate with Britain and America. So it was decided to send a little party of British and American Army officers "to get the reactions of North Africans, because it would be crazy to proceed in the dark." General Clark, at 46 the youngest general in the U.S. army and now General Eisenhower's deputy, was head of the party, and here is his story of the mission.

I went to Algiers after a certain group of people in North Africa had asked for a conference with an American general; to get there I used planes, trains, ships, submarines, canoes, automobiles—everything but mules.

Arrived off the Algerian coast, they were landed from a British submarine under the command of Lieut. N. L. A. Jewell, R.N., who had received verbal instructions from his flotilla captain. To continue the story, as told in The Daily Telegraph.

At one point on the coast they had to look for a light which would be shining from the window of an isolated house, where they were to talk with French leaders. The light failed to appear. The mission thought that it had been trapped. It waited for 24 hours. Finally, late one night, they saw the light shining through the darkness. They cautiously made their way towards the light and entered a gloomily-lighted house, where they were greeted warmly. The owner of the house had sent his wife away on a holiday. He had told the Arab servants to take a few days off, as they would not be needed because of his wife's absence.

The Arabs became suspicious. They later told the police of mysterious movements in the house, which nearly put the party in the hands of the local authorities, loyal to Vichy. The police raided the house. There was just time for the brightly-uniformed French officers to make a quick change into civilian clothes. "I never saw such excitement in my life," General Clark said. "Maps disappeared like lightning. The French general changed his clothes in a minute. I last saw him going out of the window."

General Clark and his staff gathered their papers and guns and hid in an empty wine cellar for an uncomfortable two hours. The Vichy police search, plus the protestations by the pro-Allied French officers, "sounded in the cellar like a riot." The tall angular general crouched in the cellar with a revolver in one hand: "If the police came down I was undecided whether to shoot them or bribe them." After the mission had spent an hour in hiding the police left, partly satisfied. The mission decided that there was no time to waste. Gathering their papers, they departed. It was then that they lost their trousers, shirts and almost everything else when their two boats upset. "We lost almost every stitch of our clothes and £4,500," said General Clark.

The party scrambled ashore with only their papers and underclothes and hid in the woods during the day, alternatively walking and shivering. Finally they reached a secret destination whence erelong they were whisked out of North Africa. Even then their mission remained secret, as they could not be recognized anywhere until they reached London, eight days after their start.

Those accompanying General Clark on his perilous mission were Capt. C. Courtney, Capt. R. P. Livingston, and Lt. J. P. Foot, British Commando officers, and Brig.-Gen. Lyman Lemnitzer, Col. Archelaus Hamblen, Col. Julius Holmes, all of the United States Army; and it is small wonder that all were recommended for American decorations.

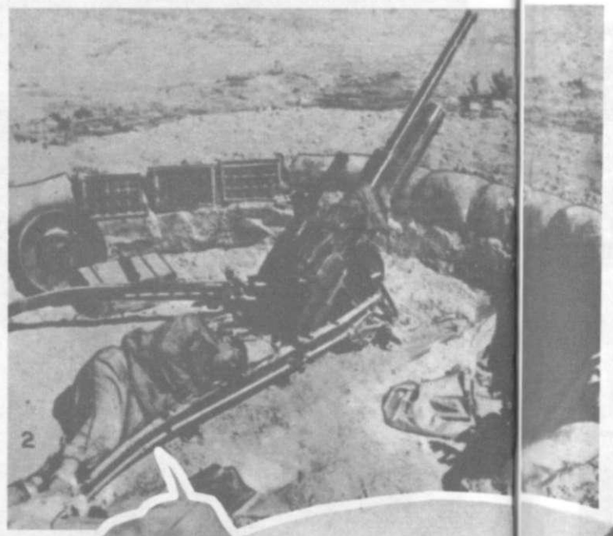
"The fact that resistance was not terrifically great anywhere and that we did not have to land in a place where opposition was great," said General Eisenhower, "testifies to the success of the mission." It should be added that the Fighting French had their agents and emissaries active, too, in every part of North Africa, and these contributed largely to the eventual success.

AT last all the preparations were complete: the vast armada had been assembled, the men were taken aboard, the guns, the planes, the tanks, vast quantities of war material of every kind, even a specially-printed supply of bank-notes. The expedition set sail—the greatest land-sea-air expedition that history records. By Nov. 7 it was within sight of the coast of Africa. On the next day, Sunday, Nov. 8, the first troops were put ashore; before the week was out French resistance, spasmodically fierce though it had been, had come to an end in Algeria and Morocco. The Allies' supremely audacious coup achieved the success that the genius and toil that went to its making deserved.

Photo, British Official; Crown Copyright

Victor of the Battle of Egypt

Hard on the heels of Rommel's shattered columns, the 8th Army's commander watches the pursuit from his tank turret. Thirty-four years have passed since Bernard Law Montgomery joined the Royal Warwickshire Regt. as a subaltern. In the last war he served three years on the Western Front; in this he took the 3rd Division to France, and brought it back from Dunkirk. Now he is concerned to see there's no Dunkirk for the Afrika Korps.



Where Now Is Rommel's 'Arrogant Army'?

"At last," said Mr. Churchill in his Mansion House speech on Nov. 10, "the Germans have received that measure of fire and steel which they have so often meted out to others." After twelve days of terrific grappling amid the minefields facing Alamein, much of Rommel's armour lay broken and derelict (1), his guns were beaten into silence, their crews slain (2), and tens of thousands of his soldiers were on their way to the prisoner-of-war cages (4).

Photos, British Official; Crown Copyright

'V' For an Historic British Victory!

"This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is perhaps the end of the beginning." In these pregnant phrases the Prime Minister summed up the Battle of Egypt. The spirit of the attackers is symbolized by this Tommy giving the "V-sign" to two captured Nazis (5); their mortars blasted the enemy's resistance (3), and their tanks, seen here (6) entering Mersa Matruh on Nov. 8, kept the foe on the run.

Photos, British Crown Copy

n This Battle the R.A.F.'s on Top

Puffs of smoke, dark against the tawny of the desert, mark the explosion of the "eggs" dropped by a Baltimore bomber amongst the tanks and transport—black specks in the photograph—of Rommel's once so proud and powerful an army. In the upper photograph we see the remains of a hundred or so German planes strewn over the bomb-pitted floor of El Daba airfield, forward base of the Luftwaffe.

UNDER THE SWASTIKA

How the Nazis Treat Their Prisoners-of-War

From time to time information leaks out from Hitler's Europe of the way of life of the hundreds of thousands of Allied soldiers who, by the fortune of war, have fallen into the hands of the enemy. In this article PAUL TABORI builds up a picture which depresses when it does not horrify.

THERE have been protests in this country against the chaining of German prisoners, declaring that this game of reprisal and counter-reprisal was unworthy of the United Nations. But putting a few hundred prisoners of war into irons is really the least and lightest of the crimes which the Nazis have committed and are daily committing on thousands of defenceless men, in open violation not only of international law but the laws of common humanity.

" The Germans use prisoners-of-war for loading and unloading boats, but avoid using them on foreign boats," a Swedish seaman told the editor of Trots Allt ! after a recent visit to Germany. " They do not arrive at their work under guard, but are accompanied only by a civilian boss, for if they tried to escape they would starve. They are clothed in the remains of their uniforms with the addition of rags made of sacking and they are utterly weak . . . Once I saw a Frenchman lifting a weight which a ten-year-old boy could have lifted, but he retched and collapsed ; he was assisted to his feet with kicks by the overseer. When I pointed out that his treatment was not suitable for a sick human being, the German replied: He is not a human being, he is worse than an animal . . . While we were eating our meal nothing could stop the prisoners from gathering outside the messroom. Once I saw a prisoner take the garbage pail, containing dish water, potato peels, etc., and eat the contents. When I asked them how much food they got, they answered by forming a small circle between thumb and first finger—a little soup in the morning, consisting without exception of potatoes and water. They were paid eight marks daily in slips which were valid only in the camp and therefore were usually thrown away as valueless . . ."

THIS is a grim picture, but the fate of the Russian prisoners-of-war is infinitely worse. The Germans argue that the U.S.S.R. has not signed the Red Cross Convention of 1929 at Geneva, and therefore Russian prisoners-of-war are not entitled to any protection. So horrible is their fate that often the civilian population takes pity on them —a sentiment which the Germans try to check with cold-blooded severity.

Outside a large Russian prison camp near Tromsoe in Norway the inhabitants gathered to help the prisoners, in spite of their own food shortage. The Germans simply shot a number of these Norwegian Good Samaritans. Next they issued a proclamation which declared: " 1. Any contact with persons belonging to a foreign power is espionage and will be punished by the death sentence. 2. Any communication with Russian prisoners by speech, signs or other means is prohibited. Women especially are forbidden contact with prisoners. Anyone infringing this order will be court-martialled. 3. Anyone approaching prisoners or found in the vicinity of the camp will be shot. 4. Expressions of sympathy for prisoners will have the most serious consequences."

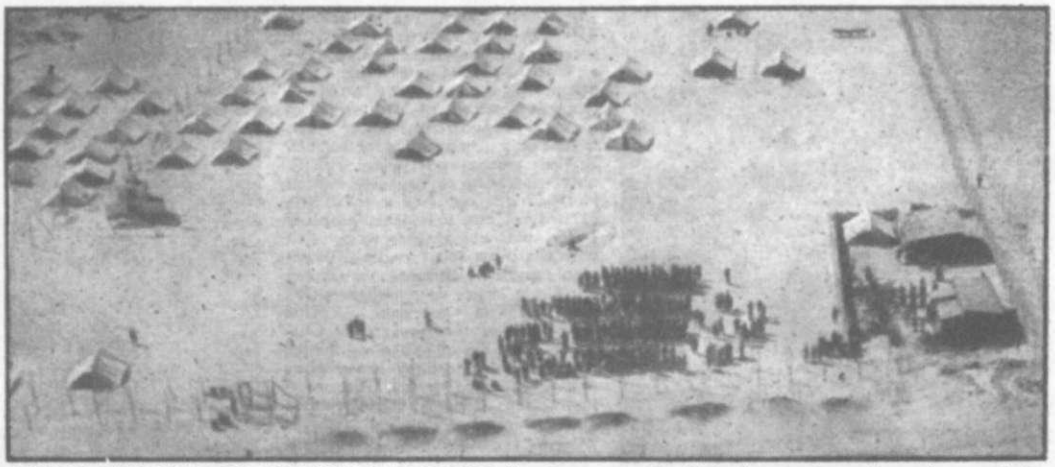
But not only Norwegians are "guilty" of the crime of humanity. A Breslau paper complains bitterly that there had been numerous cases where German women and girls had to be sentenced to penal servitude for having had contact with prisoners-of-war. At their places of employment bartering with prisoners occurs frequently; and on several occasions Germans have forwarded letters for prisoners. Apparently prisoners-of-war in Germany are not allowed to walk on the pavement (the same humiliating restriction applies to non-Aryans !) but only in the roadway—yet Germans have committed " the grave crime " of inviting them to come up to the pavement. " This is an interference with military regulations which cannot be tolerated."

The same regulations demand that Russian prisoners should be stripped of their warm clothing immediately upon capture and given a thin, shabby coat and trousers, *ersatz* shoes with wooden soles, but no socks or underwear ! The same regulations employ Russian prisoners in the immediate operational zone, contrary to all international law, where they are often killed by the barrage of their own artillery. Sometimes whole columns of prisoners are mown down on the roadside and left unburied. Now and then bullets are considered to be too precious for the massacre ; the prisoners are bound together and German tanks crush their bodies. Polish, Greek and Serbian prisoners-of-war are treated just as brutally.

AT the same time chaos seems to grow inside Germany, in spite of the Gestapo and Nazi efficiency. I found querulous articles in a Bremen and a Karlsruhe paper both complaining about prisoners-of-war who " desert the posts entrusted to them and are roaming about." A stern warning has been issued to managing directors of factories not to employ "escaped prisoners-of-war " but return them to their former place of work. This warning reveals more of the disjointed economic life of Germany than any other piece of information coming from the Third Reich. Evidently these harassed managers, driven by the Nazi warlords, are willing to employ anyone without bothering to ask where he comes from, so great is their need of manpower. And Hitler can apparently spare fewer and fewer men to guard his prisoners, thereby making their escape comparatively easy.

We all know the shameful bargaining which Laval carries on over the bodies and souls of Frenchmen. The " releve " aims at bringing back half a million prisoners in exchange for 150,000 skilled workers. But though the French are threatened with conscription and with decreased rations, they have refused to a large extent to have any part in this immoral transaction. Paris sources admit that though 600,000 French prisoners have returned from Germany (mainly because the Reich could not feed them) less than 20,000 French workers (skilled and unskilled) have gone to the Nazi paradise.

INTERNATIONAL law determines with great detail in what work prisoners-of-war can be employed. It bans any job connected with the armament industry. Yet according to a circular recently drafted jointly by the German High Command and the Reich Propaganda Ministry, " all war prisoners will to the fullest extent be employed in our production process. Prisoners-of-war must be treated in such a way that their full capacity will be available to our industry and agriculture. Unwillingness to work will be condignly punished by the Wehrmacht." And the circular adds the usual warning against the least human impulse: " War prisoners fought against Germany and are therefore our enemies. German women who cohabit with war prisoners thereby expel themselves from the national community and will receive the punishment they deserve. Every appearance of fraternization must be avoided."



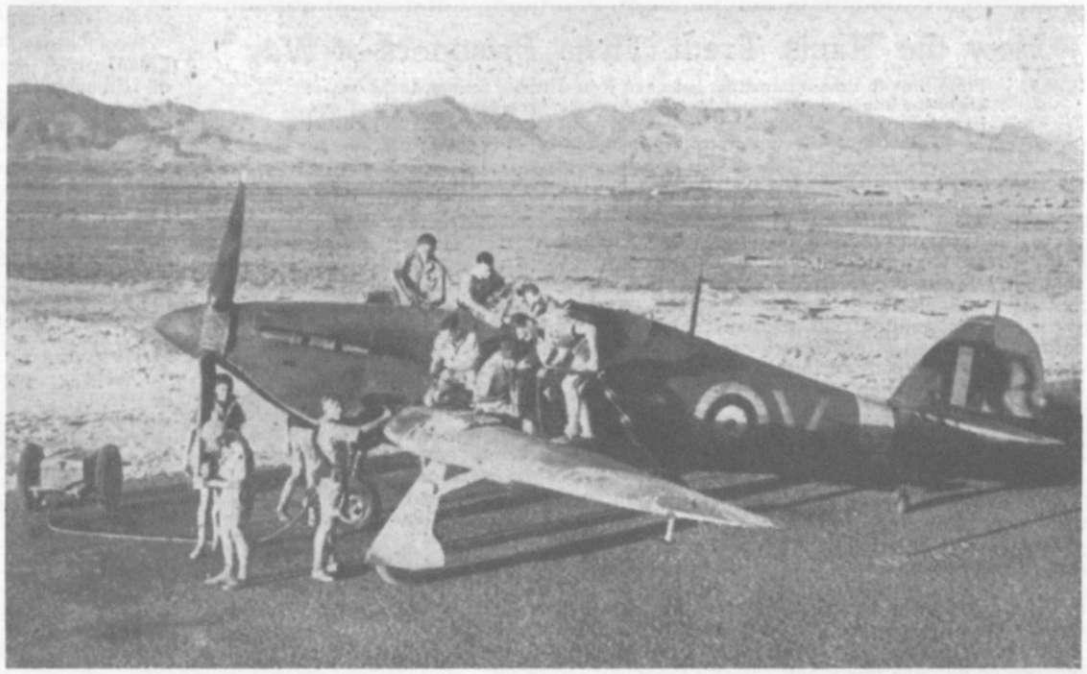
ENEMY PRISONERS IN THE WESTERN DESERT live in camps, of which the one here shown is a typical example, until arrangements can be made for their dispatch to more permanent quarters in Egypt or India. In the foreground men are seen lining up for a meal. On the extreme left rises an altar, surmounted by a cross, where religious services are held.
Photo, Associated Press

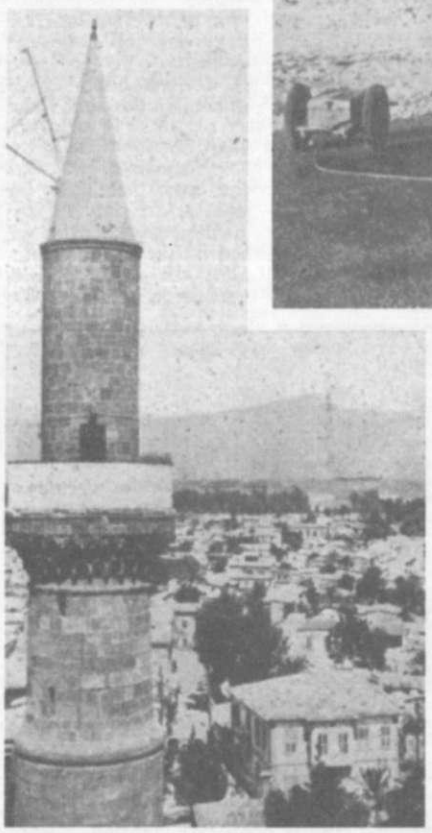
Italian papers have hinted at a large-scale escape of British airmen from an internment camp in Unoccupied France. Once the truth of this escape is known, it will certainly make one of the greatest stories of the war. The Giornale d'Italia quotes the Italian-language paper Il Nizzardo and says: " Fifty-seven British fliers escaped. The episode reveals a vast net of accomplices, as the escape could not have been successfully managed without outside help. The French persist in keeping British prisoners in the immediate vicinity of the Armistice line. Does Vichy not understand the considerable inconvenience which this entails ? "

As a rule, Britishers are infinitely better off than any other nationality. German industrial papers complain that " of all the prisoners-of-war the British are the worst workers," but as the percentage of escapes has been highest among the Britishers, this may explain why they are comparatively seldom employed outside the camps.

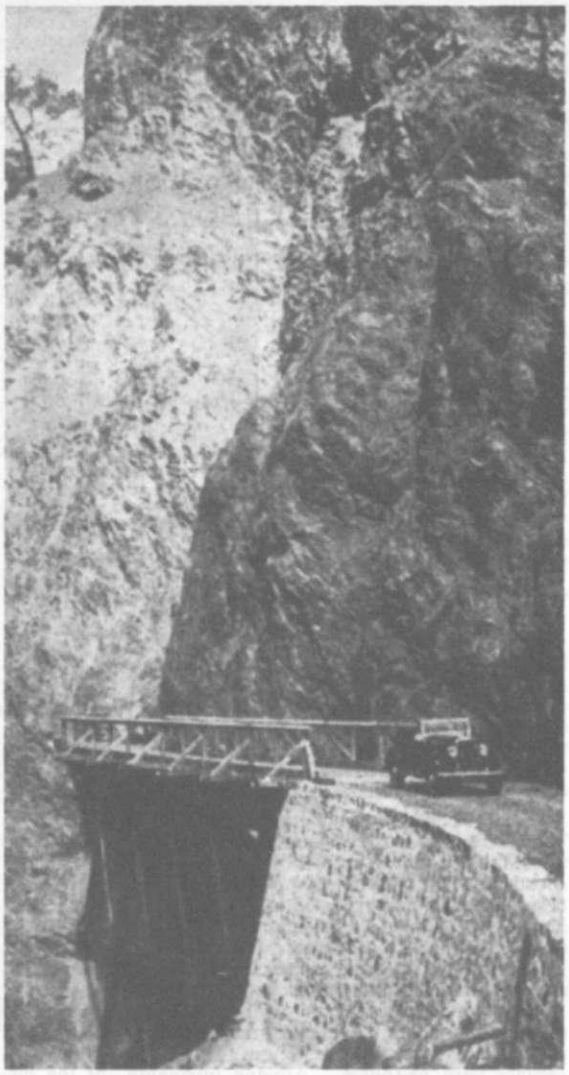
Cyprus Guards the Gate to the Middle East

R.A.F. IN CYPRUS has maintained a vigilant watch over this British outpost in the Eastern Mediterranean, and the few Axis planes which have approached the island have received a very warm reception. The photo on the right shows members of the ground staff overhauling a machine. In the background, beyond the arid plain, the mountains of Cyprus rise sharply against the skyline. Below is seen a general view of Nicosia, the capital; the minaret is a reminder of former Turkish rule. Nicosia has a population of about 23,000.





AFTER the capture of Crete in the early summer of 1941 the defenders of the island of Cyprus—a British protectorate since 1878 and annexed from Turkey in 1914—lying in the Eastern Mediterranean some 60 miles off the coast of Syria, made ready for an imminent assault. English troops and Indian, R.A.F. units (including a squadron which had distinguished itself in the Battle of Britain) and the local Volunteer Force, whose members were filled with the same spirit as the Cypriots who fought at Dunkirk, in Greece and Crete, made up a well-prepared and resolute garrison. Towns round whose medieval walls Crusaders and Turks had once fought were now defended by heavy guns and mechanized units. The opening of the Allied N. African front and the defeat of Rommel in Egypt in Nov. 1942 brought the war yet closer to Cyprus, as the struggle for control of the Mediterranean was still further intensified.



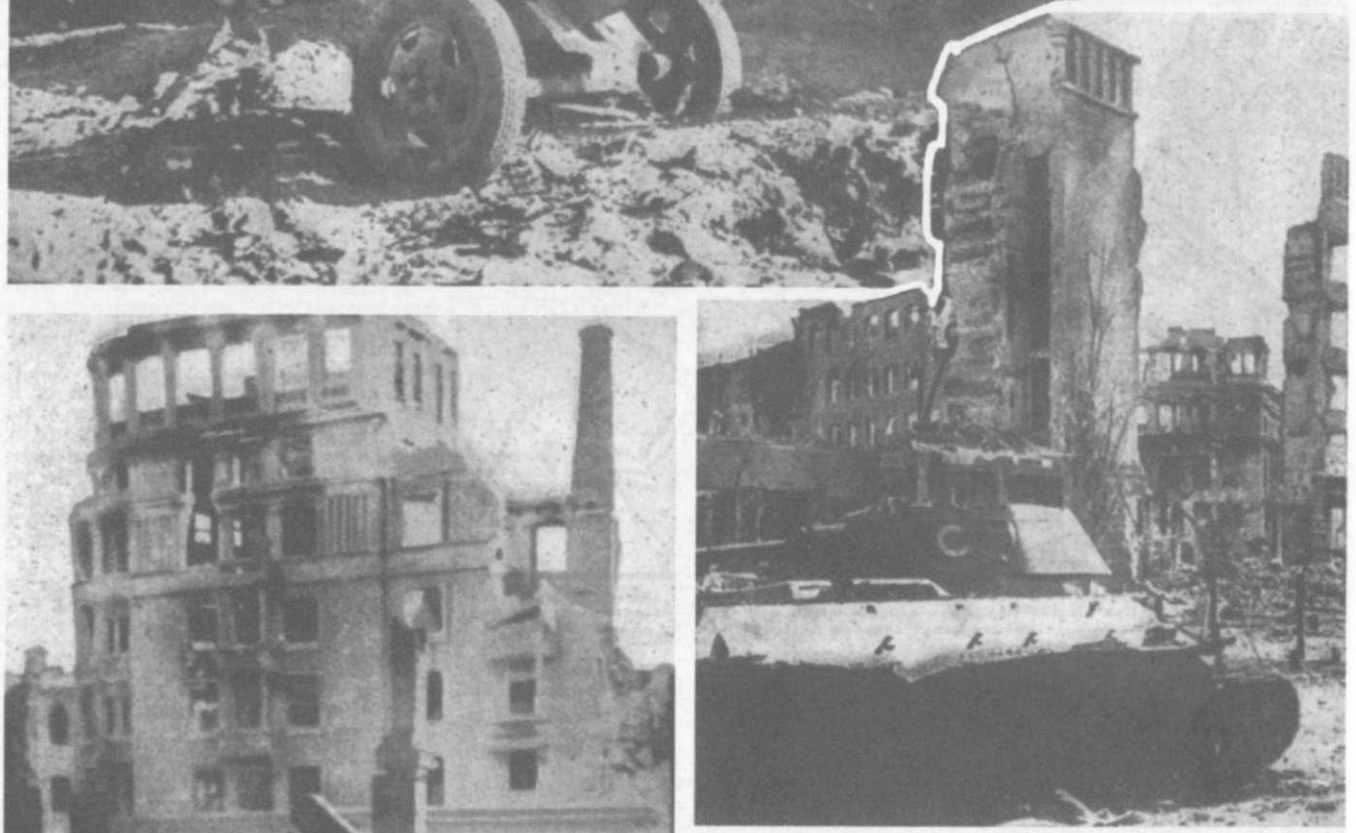
BRITISH AND CYPRIOTS are included in this group of A.A. gunners listening to an impromptu concert (left). The primary system of arterial or main roads in Cyprus totals 862 miles. Above is a section of a mountain road, one of many built recently for military purposes.

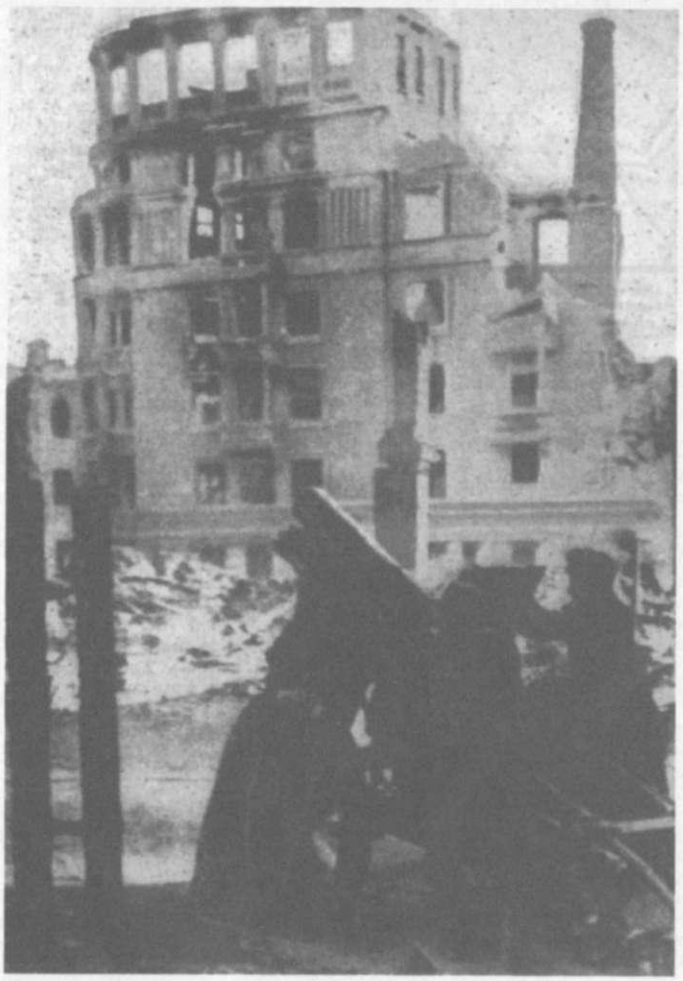
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Topical Press.

Stalingrad Spells Colossal Defeat for the Nazis

Winter's approach on the Stalingrad front saw the Germans falling back before a series of heavy Russian counter-attacks. Fighting continued to rage fiercely in the city's streets in the middle of November, 1942. Left, an abandoned anti-tank gun in a street leading down to the Volga.

Stalingrad's defenders led by the brilliant Siberian Gen. Chuikov daily inflicted enormous losses on the enemy. Attacks were concentrated mainly in the N.W. factory region. Below, a wrecked tank lies in the great Red Square. The devastated buildings in the background are all that remain of this once busy centre.





BATTERED BUT UNDEFEATED, Stalingrad withstood repeated blows launched by the enemy on a narrow front; and on Nov. 23 Moscow announced that Timoshenko's armies had broken through the besiegers' lines. Above, German field-howitzer in action against Soviet street positions. Right, a Red Army advanced patrol moves towards an enemy strongpoint.

Photos, Associated Press, Planet News

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

STRATEGIC and tactical handling of United Nations air power has demonstrated in a series of actions the importance of superimposing air activity upon surface and submarine activities. In the Pacific zone surface-ship fighting for possession of the approaches to the Solomon Islands was aided by air reconnaissance on behalf of the American fleet; this air contribution was stated to have played an important part in the resulting victory, when sixteen Japanese warships were sunk. Air cooperation in New Guinea assisted the ground forces to reduce the area held around Buna by the Japanese to a 12-mile beach; Fortresses bombed and sank a Japanese cruiser and destroyer with 500-lb. bombs on Nov. 19 off Buna and Gona. American bombers continued their action against the Japanese force in Kiska, in the Aleutian Island chain. All these actions are in the nature of long-term operations aimed at denting the Japanese-held perimeter in the Pacific with a view to further constrictive action. The importance of this great theatre of war, extending from the Solomon Islands to Ceylon as the base of a vast triangle which finds its apex in the Aleutian Islands in the Bering Sea, will increase; but for the moment the main operation in the global war is concerned with closing the line of encirclement round the Axis partners in the west.

AERIAL RING OF THE UNITED NATIONS. As is stated in this article, the whole of the area enclosed by the heavy line on this map is now brought within the sphere of operations of Allied aircraft. In this "western combative area" there is a fourfold demand on our air power.

THE western theatre of war operations lies within an immense land and water area whose boundaries are at present delineated by straight lines joining Natal (Brazil), Suez (Egypt), the south end of the Caspian Sea, Archangel, thence bending round the North Cape to Iceland, Greenland, Labrador, and finally encompassing the great curve of the Western American coastline including the Sargasso Sea, the Gulf of Mexico and the northern stretch of the South Atlantic Ocean to the relatively narrow (1,800 miles wide) channel between Natal and Dakar. Over this vast area of the earth's surface aircraft are in constant operation from bases in North, Central and South America, West Africa, Gibraltar, the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, North Russia, and Iceland, in addition to those actually concerned with the focal points of fighting.

(There are, of course, air bases outside this area and outside the Pacific triangle, situated farther south in Africa and farther west in the Americas, as well as those sited in India, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere, some of which serve as stations for the waging of bombing war: for example, Indian aerodromes whence attacks are launched against Akyab, Rangoon, and other places in Japanese hands, and those of Northern Australia which cover the southern islands of the archipelago overrun by the Japs.)

WITHIN the great western combative area aircraft are employed for four main purposes, viz. (1) tactical fighting with the forces in the field; (2) strategic operations in connexion with the general plan of campaign; (3) transport of troops and supplies in strategic connexion with focal fighting centres; and (4) protection of seaborne and overland communication lines.

The inter-relationship of the four principal demands upon United Nations' air power is not constant. It therefore follows that the allocation of aircraft for the several duties must alter from time to time as changing situations warrant. This master handling of the air situation is the responsibility of those engaged in the highest strategic direction of the war, and the penultimate decision would rest with Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt advised by their Chiefs of Staff. Until such time as the United Nations possess sufficient aircraft to execute all requirements with maximum pressure there must be occasions when effort in one direction will be relaxed to enable the aircraft necessary for greater effort in another direction to be made available. This is the explanation of the apparently variable character of the strategic air war waged against Germany, which, rising to its peak last May and June with the three plus-1,000 bomber raids on Cologne, Bremen, and Hamburg, has since fallen both in numbers of aircraft and continuity of raids. In other words, strategic air war has been forced to give way to meet the needs of tactical air war (and the lesser strategico-tactical raids in and around the Mediterranean) for the United Nations' offensive operations in North Africa.

The preliminary to the occupation of French North-West Africa was the successful outcome of the El Alamein battle in Egypt by the British Eighth Army. In addition to British supplies, 1,000 aeroplanes, 20,000 trucks, and hundreds of pieces of artillery were shipped from America to Egypt during the nine months from Feb. to October 1942 inclusive. These figures indicate but a fraction of the transatlantic transport problem. The landing of the United Nations' forces under General Eisenhower in North Africa entailed the employment of a huge convoy of 500 transport vessels and more than 350 warships. To provide air cover for this great sea fleet, Coastal Command of the R.A.F. flew more than 1,000,000 miles and 8,000 flying hours in just over three weeks. Petrol consumption for this air cover probably averaged about 2½ miles to the gallon, so that this air operation alone required about 400,000 gallons of aviation spirit.

Diversionary strategical requirements of the operation reduced air attacks against Germany, introduced more attacks against French and Italian factories, brought Bomber Command into strong action against the port of Genoa, while the Mediterranean Command of the R.A.F. attacked targets in Sicily and Sardinia, and Coastal Command waged bomber and fighter war against the submarines over the Bay of Biscay, and U.S. Army Air Force bombers bombed the submarine bases at St. Nazaire and Lorient.

While the Middle East air forces under Air Vice-Marshal "Mary" Coningham harried the retreating Axis forces speeding along the coast road through Egypt past Halfaya Pass into Cyrenaica, the great convoy approached the Gibraltar Strait under its air cover, accompanied by aircraft-carriers of the British and United States navies, and protected further by aircraft based on Gibraltar.

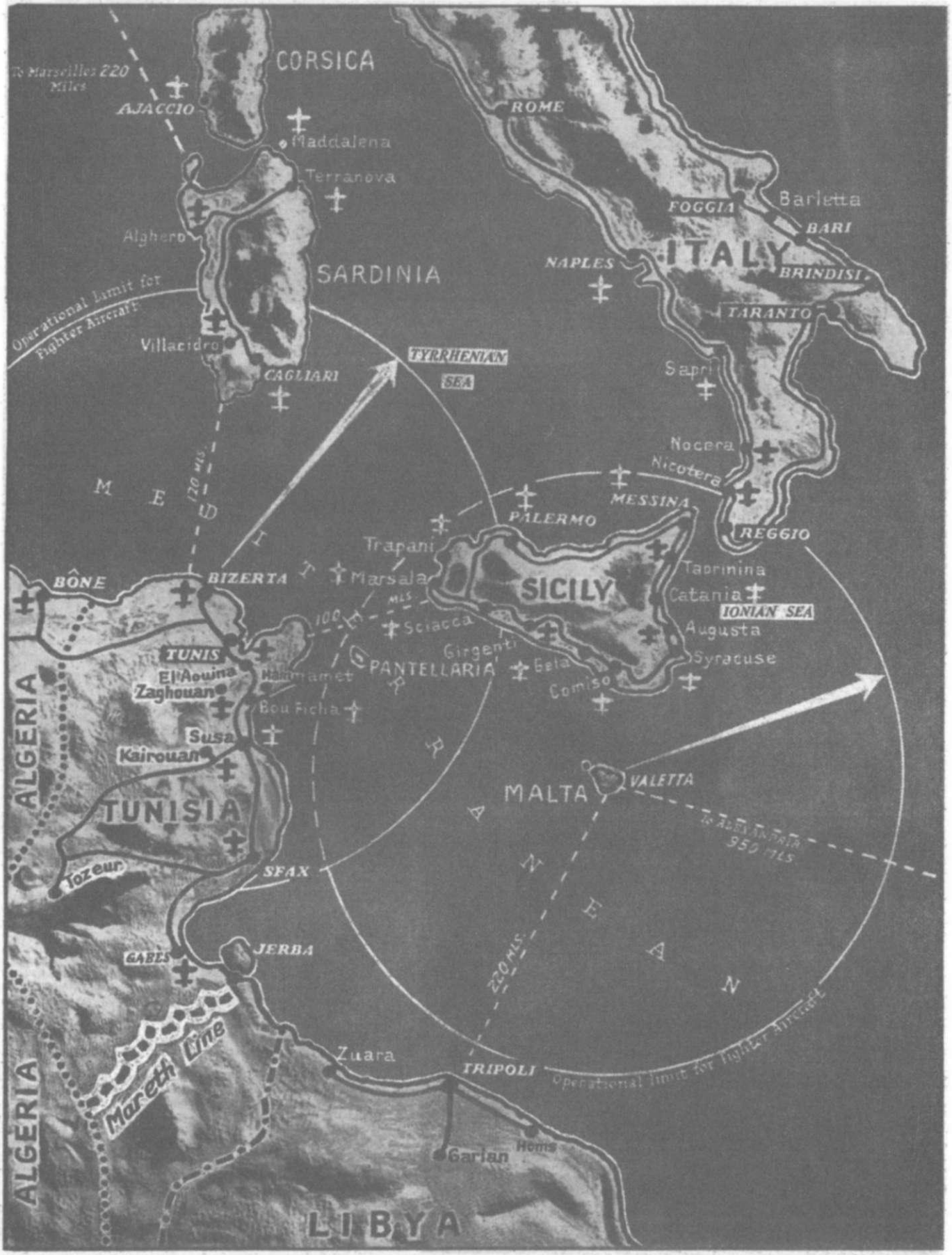
(Viscount Trenchard visited the R.A.F. units in Egypt just before the battle of El Alamein. Although not the inventor of the "air umbrella" he was the originator of the "air curtain" over the Battle of Messines in June 1917, when a screen of protective aircraft held the sky all day from zero feet to 20,000. I remember flying in that screen. We never saw an enemy aircraft approach it.)

AMERICAN landings made at Oran on Nov. 8 were supported by Fleet Air Arm aircraft bombing and machine-gunning aerodromes. American paratroops left England on the evening of Nov. 7, flew the record air invasion distance of 1,500 miles in Douglas Dakota transports, and landed to take part in the attack on Oran. More paratroops (mostly British) left England on Nov. 10 and landed at Maison Blanche (Algiers) aerodrome next day, and on the following day dropped and took Bône aerodrome. By Nov. 11 Spitfires and Hurricanes were operating from the Algiers aerodromes.

On Nov. 11 Axis fighters and dive-bombers were reported to have landed at El Alouina (Tunis) and Sidi Ahmed (Bizerta) airports. German air transports and Italian ships brought troops to Tunisia, and a German airborne tank division was reported to be landing 12-ton tanks by air.

While General Anderson's British First Army marched eastward towards Tunisia, United Nations' paratroops were flown far ahead of the ground forces and dropped to engage the German airborne troops who had entered the strategic French central Mediterranean zone opposite Sicily, and R.A.F. aircraft began the bombardment of the Axis-held Tunis airport; continuing its offensive against the southern end of the Axis, Bomber Command attacked the Fiat works in Turin on the nights of Nov. 18 and 20. Four big raids were completed against Italian cities without the loss of a single aircraft. Raids against Britain almost ceased, indicating the transfer of Luftwaffe aircraft to other fronts.

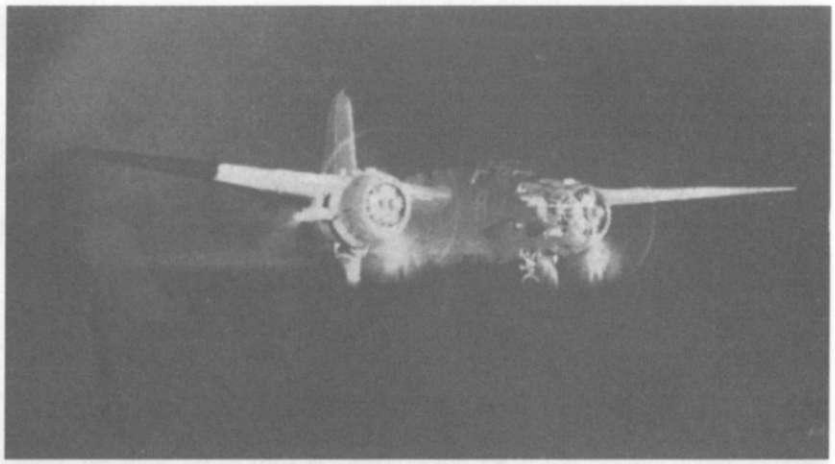
Who Holds This, Holds the Mediterranean



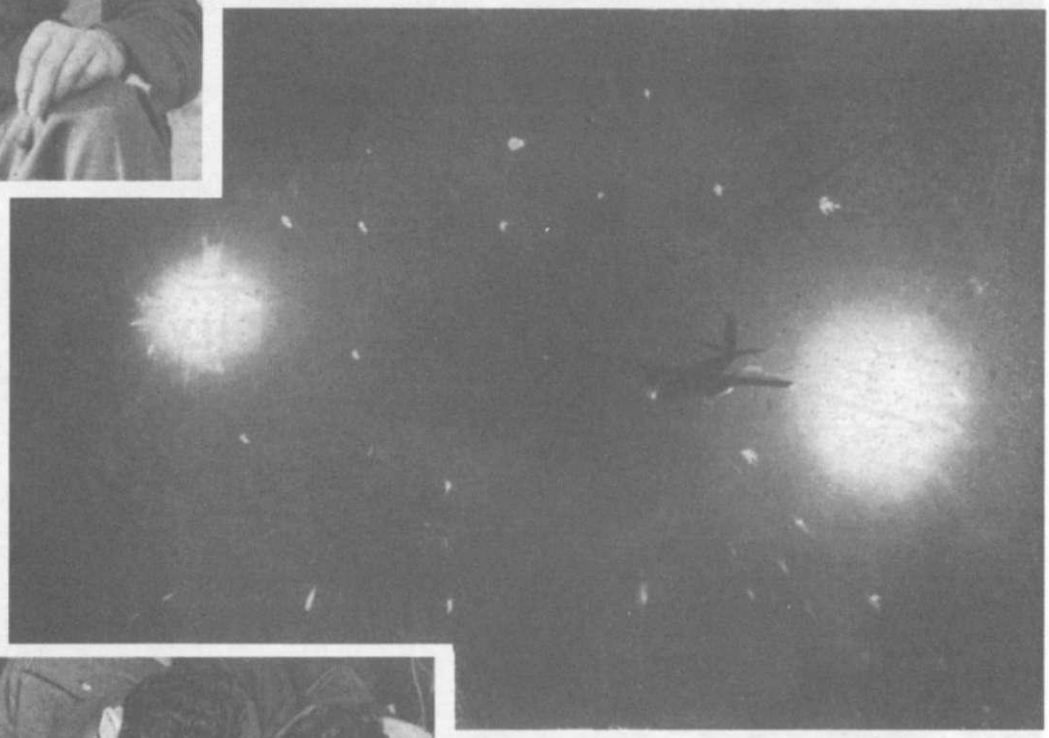
STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF BIZERTA is clear from this map. The great base is but 120 miles from Sardinia, and about 150 from Sicily, and dominates the Sicilian Narrows, through which all our fleets and convoys have to pass on their way to and from Malta, Egypt, and the Near East. Moreover, air mastery will almost certainly decide the land issue in Tunisia; and it is obvious from his reinforcement of the Luftwaffe in both Sicily and Sardinia, followed by heavy attacks on Allied bases in N. Africa, that the enemy fully realizes this. (Air bases are indicated above by a conventional aeroplane symbol.

'Do We Intrude?' Let the Nazis Answer!

'INTRUDERS'—in other words, night-fighters (operating under Fighter Command) whose special task it is to destroy enemy bombers over their home aerodromes in the Occupied Territories—have seriously hampered Axis activities by their persistent attacks. Not only are enemy machines destroyed, but railways, trains, factories and road transport have been shot up and severely damaged. The photograph above, specially taken for THE WAR ILLUSTRATED, shows Wing Commander B. R. O'B. Hoare with his mascot, "Tadzee." A description of this pioneer intruder's work is given in this page.



SETTING OUT ON AN 'INTRUSION' RAID, this Boston aircraft is about to take off from its home base. The enemy has learned to fear these attacks that strike at important airfields used by him in France and elsewhere.



Right, an example of the conditions with which the night-fighters have to contend. A Boston aircraft is caught in the light of bursting shells as it flies above an enemy target.

'THERE'S WHERE WE CAUGHT JERRY' . . . Members of the crew point out on the map a record of the night's destruction as they make their report to the Intelligence Officer on their return to their base.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Topical Press

WING CMDR. B. R. O'B. HOARE, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, was one of Fighter Command's first pilots to go "intruding" at night over enemy territory, shooting down enemy raiders over their own bases as they took off for raids on Britain or returned after their night's work.

He began in Jan. 1941 and was largely responsible for evolving Fighter Command's present "intruder" technique. His first sorties were made in a Bristol Blenheim carrying eight small bombs and armed with five machine-guns fired by the pilot. Soon afterwards his squadron was re-equipped with the more modern American-built Havoc fighter-bombers.

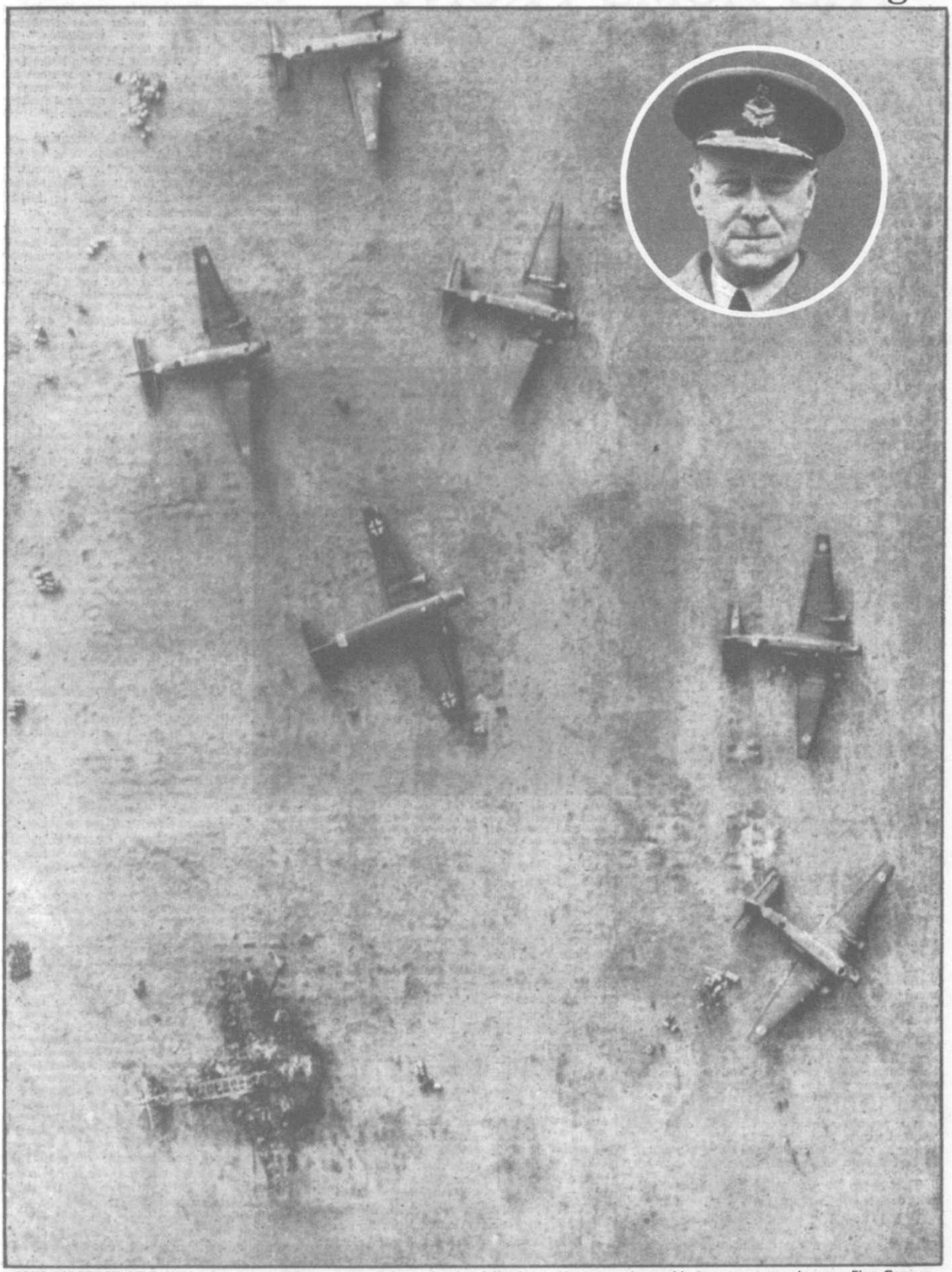
Before his first "intruder" operation, which was to the Lille area, Wing Cmdr. Hoare had flown at night only in peacetime. Now he has destroyed at least six enemy aircraft on night patrols (the types including the Heinkel 111, Junkers 88, and Dornier 215) and damaged others, not counting those bombed on the ground.

Once he pressed home his attack to such close range that when the enemy bomber, with one engine already on fire, made a steep turn and "seemed to stand still on one wing," as the Wing Commander put it, there was a collision and the Blenheim came home with pieces of the bomber embedded in its wing. On another occasion, to make sure of his victim, he dropped his bombs from so low that splinters punctured a tire of his aircraft, made a hole in one wing and almost severed some of the controls.

Wing Cmdr. Hoare was awarded the D.S.O. on Oct. 9, 1942, the citation mentioning his "excellent leadership" and adding, "he has inspired confidence in those under his command." He had then completed over 80 intruder flights over occupied territory. This veteran "intruder" is now with one of Fighter Command's operational training units, where he is busy training young night-fighter pilots in the methods of which he is so able an exponent.

Born at Brighton in 1912 and educated at Harrow and Wye Agricultural College, Wing Cmdr. Hoare joined the R.A.F. in 1936.

On Tunis Airfield Nazi Crosses Made a Target



AXIS AIRCRAFT AT TUNIS, photographed from a Beaufighter the day following a heavy attack on this important aerodrome. Five German Ju.52 troop-carriers are seen with the burnt-out remains of an Italian S.M.81. Above the latter's wreckage is another S.M.81 with German markings. Following the Anglo-American landings in Morocco and Algeria on Nov. 8, 1942, the Germans poured troops into Tunisia from Sicily, and these carriers are evidence of the Axis design to convert Tunis itself into a stronghold. Inset, Air Marshal Sir W. Welsh, in command of the R.A.F. with the Allied Forces in N.W. Africa.

Photos, British Official; Crown Copyright; Associated Press

THE HOME FRONT

by E. Royston Pike

For two years and more they had been silent, since those dark and desperate days of Dunkirk when the enemy across the Channel seemed very, very near. That was in June 1940; now it was Nov. 1942, and from cathedral belfries, from the towers and steeples of churches throughout the land, the bells rang out "in celebration," to quote a message issued from No. 10 Downing Street, "of that success granted to the forces of the Empire and our allies in the Battle of Egypt and as a call to thanksgiving and to renewed prayer." At the stroke of nine on Sunday, Nov. 15, the B.B.C. broadcast Coventry's bells pealing above the shattered and roofless cathedral. A little later they rang again, and with the bells of Westminster Abbey and of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, of the cathedrals of Armagh and Llandaff, and of the village church of Prestwich in Lancashire, were broadcast throughout the world. Millions heard them in the free countries and in those groaning under Hitler's yoke. "Did you hear them in occupied Europe?" asked the announcer. "Did you hear them in Germany? After noon today they will be silent again, except for warning of invasion if needed, till they ring out for final victory." Never was the music of the bells more welcome, never had it been heard with such grateful hearts, in sober pride—unless it was in 1588 when to city and town and village came the news that Philip of Spain's mighty armada had been shattered beyond recovery, and to St. Paul's—it was on a November day too—Queen Elizabeth went in state to return thanks for a great and glorious victory.

But not from all Britain's churches came the victory peals: some 1,200 have been wrecked or severely damaged by bombs, or the towers have been made unsafe. These stand in grim reminder of the hurricane of fire which not very long ago scorched our towns and pleasant countryside; in that hurricane the temples of God and the homes of men were alike engulfed.

Only recently has it been revealed by Mr. Ernest Brown, Minister of Health, that just over 2,750,000 houses in England and Wales have been damaged by bombs since the outbreak of war—more than one out of every five houses in the country. (In some London boroughs three houses out of every four.) Of course, included in this figure is a very large proportion of cases of minor damage where the people have not had to leave their houses at all, but houses which suffered nothing more than broken windows are not included; the figure also relates only to houses and not to shops or business premises. Of this massive total, 2,500,000 have been repaired by the local authorities and are once more occupied; while of the balance of 250,000 fewer than 150,000 have been subsequently torn down and not repaired, while nearly all the remaining 100,000 have received first-aid repairs, but for various reasons are not yet inhabited. Moreover, against this loss of 150,000 some 135,000 new houses which were in course of construction at the outbreak of war have been completed and brought into use, so that the net loss is only about 15,000.

That same Sunday when the church bells rang was Civil Defence Day, a new addition to the British calendar. As Mr. Churchill said in a special message, it was a piece of good fortune, it was symbolic, that the day, "a witness and reminder of the great defensive effort of two years ago, should fall in the midst of our first great offensive success over the Nazi enemy. While we rejoice in the deeds of the Navy, the Army and the Air Force in Africa, we remember those other days, when the deeds of Civil Defenders did so much to keep our will to victory invincible." That was well said, and the day was well kept. In all parts there were special church services and Civil Defence parades, and in London the King, prior to attending a service at St. Paul's Cathedral, took the salute as 1,500 heroes and heroines of the Blitz marched past. A contingent from Dover headed the procession, since Dover was the first of our towns to experience raids on a large scale; after them came a detachment from heavily-punished Coventry, and then group after group each carrying a board with the name of its much-raided town or city. That night the postscript to the 9 o'clock news was given by Mr. Herbert Morrison, the Minister of Home Security. The fighting qualities now seen in the triumphant attacks of our citizen soldiers on the African battlefields were first visible, he said, in the deeds of Civil Defenders in our city streets, under the bombers' moon. "You entered it for a principle," he told the great civilian army. "You have fought it like crusaders. History will name you the spearhead of humanity on its onward march. After the War, whatever may happen to the body of Civil Defence, its spirit will not die . . ."

LORD WOOLTON, Minister of Food, holding the special Victory Loaf presented to him at a display of 7,000 loaves made by master bakers all over Great Britain with a view to discovering the most nutritious bread for the nation. *Photo, Sport & General*

Winter has come again—the fourth winter of the War—and the Ministry of Health has launched its usual health campaign. Attack on the careless cough and sneeze is being renewed, and we shall be seeing posters with last year's rather uninspired slogan, "Coughs and sneezes spread diseases—Trap the germs in your handkerchief." Generally speaking, public health seems to be pretty good, but a note of warning was sounded by a Birmingham doctor, Dr. A. J. Brown, at a conference organized by the British Medical Association.

In the industrial areas, at least (he said), doctors' consulting-rooms are becoming fuller and fuller, and their time is being more and more occupied by men and women suffering from a host of minor ailments. Food is adequate, he went on; workers can supplement their rations by canteen meals, black-out conditions have not altered, bombing has been less severe—yet there is increased illness. Why? "I suggest the obvious cause is fatigue, industrial fatigue due to excessive working hours, often under poor conditions, particularly of light and ventilation." Dr. Brown quoted a passage from a report by the Chief Inspector of Factories, that the long hours being worked are "in the nature of a concession to a section of outside opinion, which is prone to associate reasonable hours with personal slackness or with alleged waste of man-power . . ."

There's one disease that is increasing—one which always increases in time of war, when men and women are living unnatural lives, far from their homes and friends and exposed to temptations which in normal times would have small appeal.

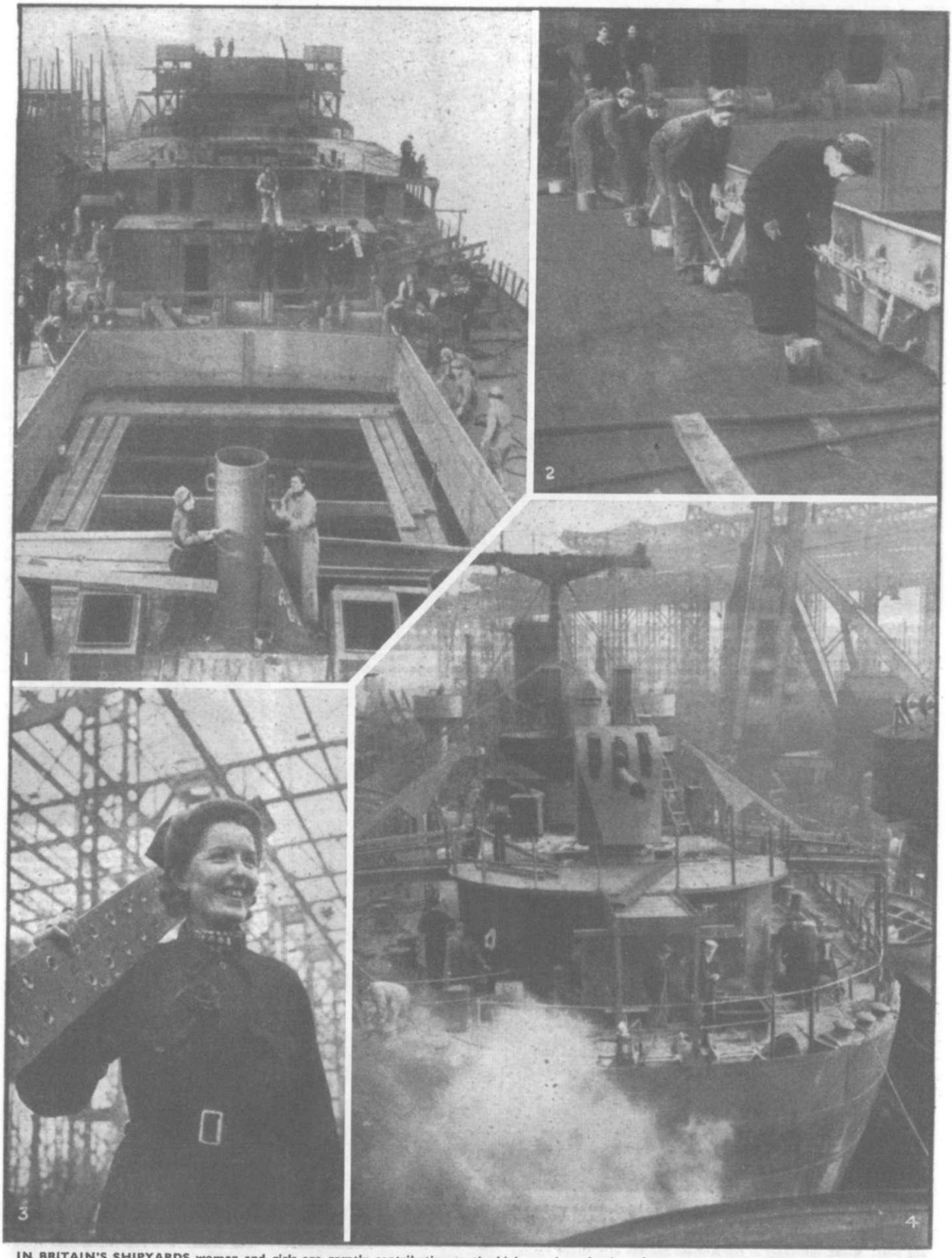
Venereal disease before the War was steadily decreasing, Sir Wilson Jameson, Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health, said recently; but whereas in 1939 the number of new infections of syphilis was 5,000, in 1940 it was 5,600 and in 1941 it was 7,300—an increase of 50 per cent during the war years and, if infections in the Services in this country are included, of 70 per cent. And since last year there were about 60,000 new cases of gonorrhoea, the total venereal infections among civilians is nearly 70,000. Everything necessary for the cure of these diseases is at hand, said Sir Wilson Jameson, and facilities for free and confidential diagnosis and successful treatment exist in all parts of the country. But because of the old hush-hush tradition the public does not know what it ought to know. "Let's get rid of this taboo. I believe that the people of Britain, who have stood up to far worse things in this way, are ready to face up squarely and seriously to the problem of V.D. Once they do that, we are well on the way to solving it. The moral aspect will be dealt with by others; to me, venereal disease is just another medical and public health problem, like diphtheria, scarlet fever and consumption; and I know it often spreads to men and women who are in no sense guilty parties, and to unborn babies."

By propaganda it is hoped to persuade sufferers from these diseases to submit to early treatment, but notorious cases may now be dealt with under a new Defence Regulation, 33b. If at least two separate patients under treatment for V.D. name the same person as the suspected source of their infection the local Medical Officer of Health may require the person named to submit to medical examination and if necessary to attend for treatment by a specialist until free from infection. Failure to do so will be punishable with up to three months' imprisonment, or a fine of £100, or both.

All the same, some critics of the Order have argued that it will work unfairly against women. (This was the argument, it may be recalled, advanced by that brave Victorian lady, Josephine Butler, in her long fight against the Contagious Diseases Acts passed in the middle of the last century to regulate prostitution in the neighbourhood of military garrisons.) But the charge of unfair sexual discrimination could be brought much more reasonably against the D.O.R.A. Regulation 40d of 1917, which made it a criminal offence for a woman suffering from venereal disease to communicate it to a member of H.M. Forces or to solicit him. At least it may be claimed that 33b applies both to men and women, and it is said to avoid other features which made the regulation of the last war objectionable. True, it represents an invasion of the liberty of the subject; but only the most fanatical devotee of laissez faire would advance that here.

But there's one instance of sexual discrimination about which there is no doubt: the rates of war injuries compensation paid to women are only two-thirds of the men's. Why? No one seems to know, unless it be that women usually are discriminated against in pay and pensions. But Mrs. Tate, M.P. for Frome, wouldn't take that for an answer; and on Nov. 25 her "equal compensation" amendment to the Address was defeated only by 229 votes to 95.

Women Shipbuilders Out to Beat the Record



IN BRITAIN'S SHIPYARDS women and girls are greatly contributing to the high-speed production of merchant vessels. These photos were taken at a Northern yard where women are employed as riveters, welders and painters. 1 and 2, Women painters at work on the hatches of partially finished vessels. 3, This girl carries a plate which marks where rivets have to go. 4, A 7,000-ton merchant ship completed within three weeks. American Mr. Kaiser must look to his laurels!

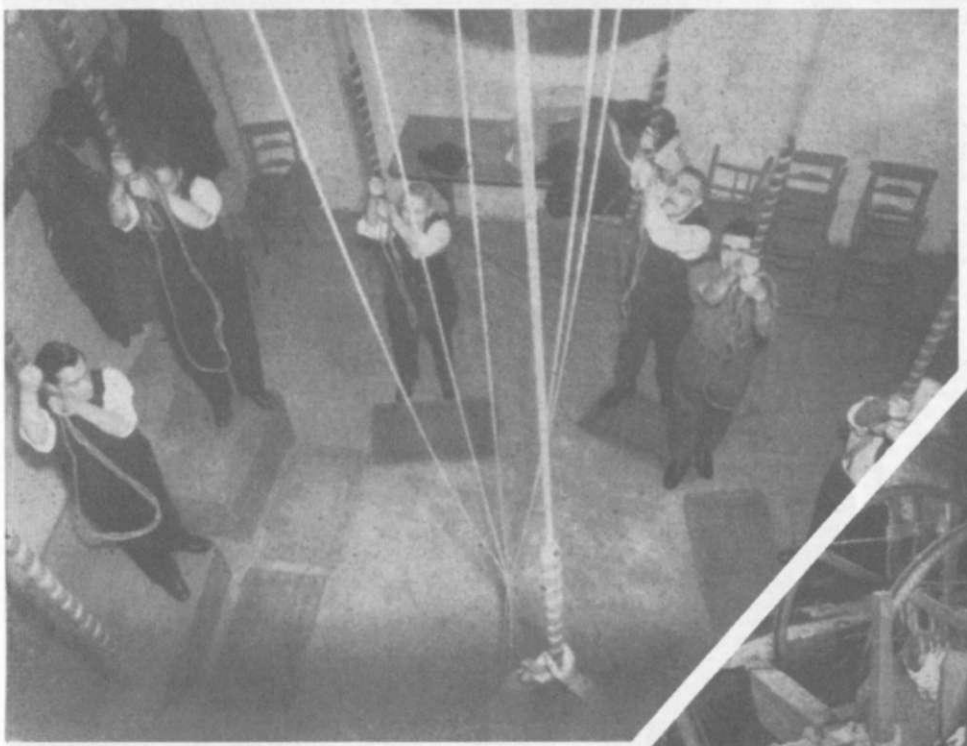
Photos, L.N.A., Planet News

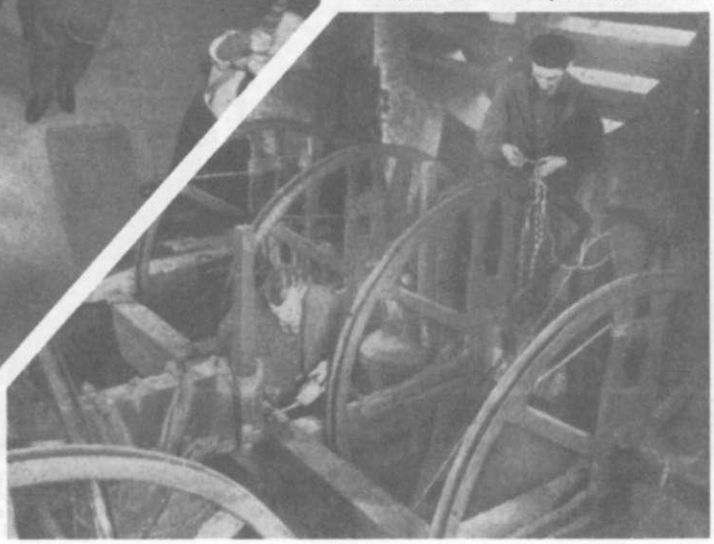
On a Sunday in November the Bells Rang Again

CIVIL DEFENCE DAY—Nov. 15—appointed by the King to honour the Civil Defence services, coincided with the nation's desire to mark the Battle of Egypt. Fifteen hundred "civil defenders" from the principal bombed areas of Britain marched past the King and Queen outside St. Paul's, London. This photo shows women drivers of the British-American ambulance sections, members of the staff of London Transport, nurses and ambulance women passing the saluting base at the south portico.

SIGNPOSTS, banished from the roads of Britain ever since invasion seemed imminent in June 1940, are now being re-erected in certain places. This one at Vauxhall, London, points in the direction of the Kentish coast, and well may augur a future invasion—of Germany.

F./O. L. T. MANSER, R.A.F.V.R., captain and 1st pilot of a Manchester aircraft, took part in the Cologne raid of May 30, 1942. Although his plane had been hit and was on fire, he pressed home his attack and enabled his crew to bale out before he perished with his machine. It was announced on Oct. 24 he had been awarded a posthumous V.C.





VICTORY BELLS rang out from cathedrals and churches on Nov. 15, 1942, in thanksgiving for the Allied successes in Egypt. The joyful clangour of the bells (silent since June 1940) was broadcast to the world. Above, bellringers at Westminster Abbey sounding the opening peal. Right, members of the Ancient Society of College Youths releasing the ropes and greasing the bells of St. Paul's Cathedral in readiness for the occasion.

Photos, G.P.U., Planet News, New York Times Photos

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

Off Algeria We Fought Waves of Nazi Bombers

How the landing of the British First Army in Bougie Bay on the Algerian coast, at dawn on Nov. 11, was successfully accomplished, in spite of ferocious attacks on our troopships by the Luftwaffe, is told below by Charles Wighton, Reuters correspondent with the Navy in North Africa.

I AM alive to write this story because the great troop-transport in which I am travelling was saved by the audacious seamanship of a Dutch captain and the lean-faced British Naval officer who stood beside him on the bridge through twenty-four hours of incessant, nerve-racking bombing by Junkers planes.

Our liner was the main target in a last great all-out attack when more than fifty German dive-bombers rained 21 near-misses around the ship in 65 minutes. Today we are safe at last from the screaming bombers and the whistling aerial torpedoes. For this we thank the gun-crews, who maintained an unbelievable barrage in the dusk and the dawn in their open turrets above the decks.

There was no opposition from the French authorities when our detachment of the 1st Army was landed. But within two hours of the London radio announcement that the port had been occupied three-engined Italian Cants roared over in a terrific high-level bombing assault.

Intense A.A. fire drove them off. Then 20 or 30 Ju.88s came diving from the low clouds on the shipping about Bougie Bay. One bomb smashed through a lifeboat hanging on one of the ship's davits and destroyed a motor landing craft alongside. The crew were killed and there were other casualties among small craft moving between the ships. Dusk was shadowing the coast when 50 Junkers in relays of five weaved their way through the fierce criss-cross anti-aircraft fire from the 6,000-ft.-high mountain tops.

I WATCHED this raid lying flat among timber on Bougie Pier. Soon I was on a landing craft racing to take off the troops still aboard the transports. As the raid opened a ship put to sea. In the thickening darkness the bombers spotted her. For an hour the Junkers trailed her remorselessly as she steamed westward along the coast at 20 knots, hammering her with bombs and torpedoes.

Hit by heavy bombs, she sank in flames a short distance offshore. Less than half an hour after the first torpedo hit most of the vessel had disappeared—but not before all on board had been taken off in small craft. Three hundred were transferred to our liner.

Our dark grey shape merged into the deeper colours of the mountainous coast wall as we waited for the inevitable dawn attack. If we had been hit, everyone could have got ashore. As the fine Dutch sailor said to me during this night of waiting: "If I had taken this ship so near the shore in peacetime I should have been sacked. But I have my duty to the hundreds of people I have aboard."

MORNING light was growing stronger when we heard the hum across the waves. There, camouflaged by the mountains, we watched the new attack—spectators for once. We appeared to be perfectly concealed from the attackers. Ships which had not taken similar precautions, and were still at anchorage, were the targets of the bombers and torpedo-carriers that thundered across the bay.

When the fierce attack ended we could see British fighters streaking out to sea after the retiring enemy, and we all thought, "It will be the end. The Spitfires are here." We returned to the bay and once again started unloading Army transport vehicles for the troops landed the day before. For three hours we had peace.

But we were obviously the main target for what might come. Our Dutch captain and the cheery British senior Naval officer who was always at his elbow decided it was suicide for us to stay. We signalled ashore for permission to leave with our cargo partly unloaded. The reply was still awaited when the attack came.

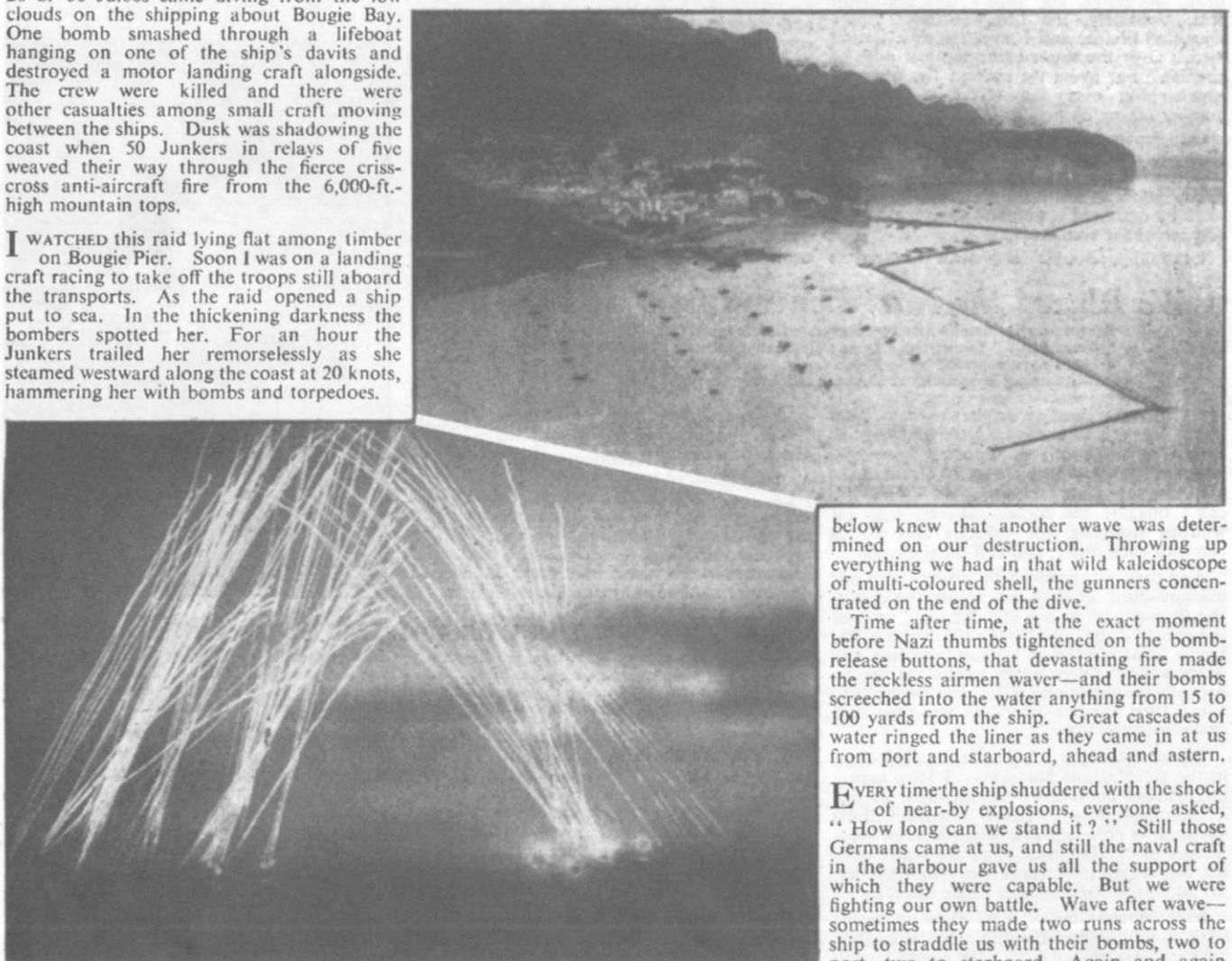
FLYING high they came at us, waves of three or four every few minutes. Around us were freighters and small naval ships, but we were the target. The Luftwaffe were determined to wipe out the troop transports. If they had anything to do with it, we should not leave Bougie.

For an hour that fleet of at least 50 aircraft pounded at the shipping—with three-quarters of the bombs directed at us. And we were never hit. Never once did we call on the medical officers, who risked their lives by remaining near danger spots. Around the decks were the usual light A.A. guns and two heavier ones. They were manned by the Army and Navy and by the Dutch crew.

At the height of the raid I saw the barber and the bar attendant banging away at diving bombers as though they had been gunners all their lives. The Oerlikons rattled, and those below knew that another wave was determined on our destruction. Throwing up everything we had in that wild kaleidoscope of multi-coloured shell, the gunners concentrated on the end of the dive.

Time after time, at the exact moment before Nazi thumbs tightened on the bomb-release buttons, that devastating fire made the reckless airmen waver—and their bombs screeched into the water anything from 15 to 100 yards from the ship. Great cascades of water ringed the liner as they came in at us from port and starboard, ahead and astern.

EVERY time the ship shuddered with the shock of near-by explosions, everyone asked, "How long can we stand it?" Still those Germans came at us, and still the naval craft in the harbour gave us all the support of which they were capable. But we were fighting our own battle. Wave after wave—sometimes they made two runs across the ship to straddle us with their bombs, two to port, two to starboard. Again and again the gunners made them falter at the final second. The water was brown all around with mud churned from the bottom by exploding bombs. An intense fire of yellow, green and



BOUGIE, Algerian port at which troops of the British 1st Army landed on Nov. 11, 1942, lies 120 miles E. of Algiers. In the aerial view of this town (upper photo) six squadrons of seaplanes are to be seen in the outer port. Lower photo, tracer shells sent up by ships of the Royal Navy against enemy aircraft that sought to interfere with the Allied operations, as described by Reuters Correspondent in this page. *Photos, British Official; E.N.A.*

red streamed through the bombers' fuselage. We did not see any of the attackers go down—though almost certainly some did not survive the swirling steel curtain of explosives, and many may have failed to reach their Sardinian bases.

This could not go on. No ship could hope to stand up to such punishment and escape every time. Four bombers straddled us. Two of the bombs screamed over the wireless aerial to plunge 20 yards to the port side. The aircraft banked and made for home. For over an hour we had endured this rain of high explosives. With a fatalistic shrug of their shoulders, the resolute couple on the bridge raised their glasses to watch for the next wave. They watched and waited. It did not come. From the shore came a signal: "Proceed to base."

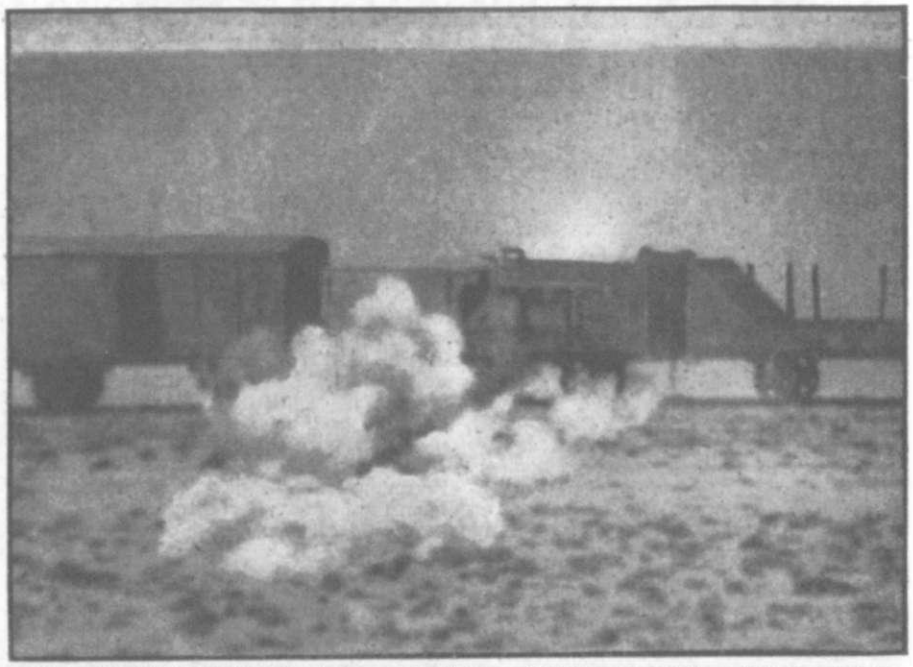
ON the faces of our 300 survivors from the sunken ship was a look of infinite relief. But we were still faced with the trip to our base. As we rounded the point another alarm sounded. We escaped the bombers' notice. Determined to save the hundreds on board if we were hit, the captain kept close inshore and made up his mind to run aground if we were bombed and set ablaze. With the engineers driving the motors faster than they had ever turned during the voyage, the captain tore along the Algerian coast as near as he dared.

One, two, three hours passed. We were lined up on the deck carrying out emergency drill. Jocularly, the ship's sergeant-major suggested that he and I might share a Carley float. Over the water came the low note of aircraft. Far away we spotted the machine approaching over the waves—a torpedo-bomber taking up position.

Gun crews raised their still-hot guns—and cheered. Chugging towards us was a Fleet Air Arm Walrus. Looking for all the world like a tramcar adrift in the sky, it passed close by and kept a watchful eye on our ship and escort for some time.

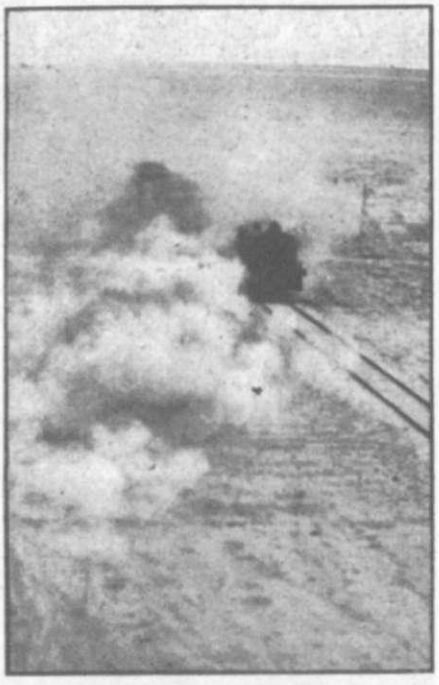
Gradually, Bougie Bay with its terrible memories slipped behind. Had the Junkers and Dornier crews reported that we had received direct hits and had probably sunk? Again the faint whine of aircraft motors came. Two Spitfires streaked past. From then until darkness, several hours later, small groups of fighters shepherded us closely every few minutes.

The red African sun slipped below the waves. Back on the bridge after his first brief sleep for many hours, the captain searched the gloom through his glasses. Darkness blotted us out. In less than half an hour we were at anchor in our base.



ON ROMMEL'S RAILWAY this train, running between Sidi Barrani and Mersa Matruh, has been set on fire by a low-flying plane. Above, shooting-up ammunition on the anti-aircraft truck; below, shells bursting on the engine. As told in this page, Axis supply lines to the front in Egypt suffered non-stop attacks from our aircraft.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright



We Blitzed the Nazi Convoys from 10 Feet Up

Beating-up Rommel's supply columns on the coastal road to Tobruk was "Great fun!" for British fighter pilots but nightmare for the Nazi lorry drivers, says a young wing commander who was in charge of convoy-smashing operations in Egypt. His lively story is given below.

HONESTLY, beating up that road is great fun. You cannot help feeling just like a small boy in school with a pea-shooter. We just race along, 10 ft. up in the air, and shoot up everything we see—petrol lorries, troop-carriers, everything. And you can't imagine the scene. Drivers leap off without stopping, the vehicles and lorries run into each other, and roll off the road.

And then we shoot-up the troops with our machine-guns as they run across the desert. We fly well out to sea and then sail in over the enemy coast, just above the beach. We try to be as cheeky as we can, and just pop in anywhere. Often we fly so low that we go beneath the telephone wires, but we have to rise a little for the attack as we must dive down to open fire.

We have to keep a look-out for explosions in the vehicles just below us. I have seen a lorry wheel floating by me through the air. The damage done to enemy transport along the road is colossal, and what is more satisfactory is the fact that, since we really went for this road in earnest early in October, my squadron hasn't lost a single aircraft.

Jerry brought heavy A.A. guns up to the road to try to spoil our fun. But even then we managed to fool him. He would launch one barrage at about 50 ft. right across the road. Then, about a mile farther on, there would be another at about 150 ft. His idea was that we would try to jump over the first barrage and run into the second. But we fooled him beautifully by going in beneath the first barrage and knocking the hell out of everything from about ten feet up.

Shooting-up trains is a sort of sideline which crops up every now and again. Once when we shot up the locomotive of a train there was no opposition—so we went back and just sprayed the whole train from one end to the other methodically and set it on fire.

I Watched the General Decorate Our Heroes

Some were quiet-looking little men you would expect to see at home behind shop counters, on office stools, taking fares in buses—but each was a hero. This account of the simple ceremony of a desert battle-front investiture comes from Clifford Webb, the Daily Herald special correspondent.

THE Corps Commander had fixed fifteen hours thirty as the time for the distribution of awards, and at fifteen hours a rectangle about 60 yards by 30 had been pegged out on the desert plateau.

At fifteen hours, four soldiers armed with Bren guns posted themselves at each side of the rectangle. A small table was brought from a near-by caravan and placed inside what was now hallowed ground.

Officers began to drift towards the scene, and away in the distance two columns of marching men swung steadily towards us. For a moment I was puzzled. Then I remembered. That was it. For the first time I was watching men march in formation in the desert. I had seen men in tanks, in trucks, on foot in dispersed formation about to go into action, but never before in close marching order.

It was a brave spectacle. Somewhere in the distance bagpipes skirled. They had nothing to do with the ceremony, but had crept in most appropriately as off-stage noises sometimes do.

The columns swung down each side of the rectangle, were halted and turned to face inwards by officers who had probably not shouted so loud in months.

"By the right, dress. Up a bit No. 4 in the rear rank!" The good old parade ground stuff out here in the blue. A mere couple of miles away the heavy guns snarled

angrily, but nobody gave a sign they heard anything. "Stand at ease!"

An officer advances to the centre of the rectangle and addresses the men:

"In the event of an attack by hostile aircraft, you will about turn, disperse and double to cover as fast as you can."

THE medal winners, a thin line of officers and men, ranged themselves at the open end of the rectangle opposite the table. And now the General himself, dapper in shorts and bush shirt, steps down from his caravan, acknowledges the salutes of his officers, and walks into the hollow square.

"You probably think it a bit of a nuisance," he says, "having to come here to be decorated, but I wanted to thank you and to congratulate you personally. Medals are not won easily in the British Army, and you may be sure any man who gets an award has earned it.

"I read all the recommendations for awards. They make magnificent reading. They form the complete answer to any suggestion that this race of ours is decadent. We have here today officers who rallied their men when all seemed lost, gunners who stuck by their guns though wounded, and in desperate danger, anti-tank men who held their fire in the face of murderous enemy shelling until such time as the German tanks came near enough to be wiped out with direct hits."

The General goes back to the table where an officer is handling the new, brightly-coloured medal ribbons. The ordeal of the brave men begins—the D.S.O. for Brigadier G. W. J. E. Erskine, Military Crosses for captains and lieutenants, D.C.M.s and M.M.s for sergeants, corporals and troopers.

That awkward walk up to the table between admiring lines of comrades. The smart salute, the handshake and the mumbling, halting words of reply to the General's congratulations—I see the stuff of which heroes are made, and I realize more than ever before that there is no physical pattern for a brave man.

GEN. SIR B. L. MONTGOMERY presenting the V.C. ribbon to Sgt. K. Elliot, of New Zealand, for outstanding bravery at Ruweisat on July 15, 1942. An account of a similar investiture in the desert is given in this page.
Photo, British Official

Some of these medal winners are timid, inoffensive-looking little men you would expect to see at home behind shop counters, on office stools, taking fares in buses. I feel somebody ought to cheer, but nobody bats an eyelid.

Lance-Sergeant McNeill, a bow-legged, granite-like little Scot, marches awkwardly to the table and performs a quick two-step in his embarrassed anxiety to come smartly to attention before saluting. But he grins happily as the General pins the ribbon to his shirt, and talks back confidently enough.

Rifleman Willis wears glasses, and a bandage on one leg, but comes to attention readily enough despite his limp. He looks to me like the kind of man who could and would pick up a dog that had been run over and injured without getting bitten.

Gunner McMullen can only extend two fingers for his handshake. The others are hidden under bloodsoaked linen. And so the desert ceremony comes to an end.

NO enemy aircraft had made dispersal necessary, but all through the guns had rumbled and roared.

"*Will Company Officers dismiss their men.*"

The staccato orders are given. The men turn and move away. The Brigadier representing the medal winners turns to salute the General, then moves easily across to congratulate his fellow heroes. Would they join him in a cup of tea?

They would. That's fine. The big tent across the way. And as I walk with them I inquire with a newspaperman's curiosity when and how they will get the medals that go with the ribbons just received. A sergeant looks blankly at a trooper, who shakes his head. "Blowed if I know!" he grins.

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

NOV. 11, 1942, Wednesday *1,166th day*

North Africa.—Darlan ordered all French commanders in Algeria and Morocco to cease hostilities. British 1st Army and U.S. troops occupied Bougie. Axis aircraft landed in Tunisia.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops made progress N.W. of Stalingrad.

General.—German and Italian troops began occupation of Vichy France and Corsica.

NOV. 12, Thursday *1,167th day*

North Africa.—British and U.S. paratroops captured aerodrome at Bône. Tunis airfield raided by Allied aircraft.

Libya.—Allied fighters strafed enemy columns W. of Tobruk; six troop-carriers full of German troops shot down.

Russian Front.—Fresh German assault on Stalingrad resulted in slight advance.

Australasia.—Naval engagement off the Solomons began on night Nov. 11-12.

General.—Germans announced that Toulon would not be occupied.

NOV. 13, Friday *1,168th day*

Air.—R.A.F. Lancasters and Stirlings raided Genoa by night without loss.

North Africa.—Eastern Task Force under Gen. Anderson occupied Bône.

Libya.—Tobruk again in British hands; Sollum and Bardia also occupied.

Russian Front.—Many German attacks repelled at Stalingrad.

Australasia.—Off Guadalcanal Jap fleet tried to cover large-scale landing of reinforcements.

NOV. 14, Saturday *1,169th day*

Air.—U.S. Fortresses and Liberators made daylight raids on La Pallice and St. Nazaire U-boat bases.

North Africa.—New Allied contingents landed at Bône. Allied raid on Tunis aerodrome.

Libya.—Our forces cleared retreating enemy from Cyrenaica as far as Tmimi and Gazala.

Australasia.—In New Guinea Australians captured Wairopi and advanced on Buna.

NOV. 15, Sunday *1,170th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced loss of H.M. submarine Talisman.

Air.—R.A.F. bombers again raided Genoa without loss.

Libya.—Eighth Army occupied landing-ground at Martuba. Enemy losses by casualties and capture now estimated at 75,000 Germans and Italians.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops continued to advance S.E. of Nalchik.

Burma.—R.A.F. bombers made day and night attacks on Jap aerodromes at Akyab and Magwe.

Australasia.—In New Guinea Australian and U.S. troops joined forces and converged on Buna.

NOV. 16, Monday *1,171st day*

Australasia.—U.S. Navy Dept. ann. that off Guadalcanal on Nov. 13, 14 and 15 American fleet sank two Jap battleships, 8 cruisers, 6 destroyers and 12 transports for the loss of 2 U.S. light cruisers and 7 destroyers.

NOV. 17, Tuesday *1,172nd day*

Air.—U.S. Fortresses and Liberators raided submarine base at St. Nazaire.

North Africa.—Allied bombers from Libya raided Tunis aerodrome; nine enemy aircraft destroyed in attacks on our forces between Bône and Tunisian border.

Libya.—Announced that our troops had occupied Derna and Mekili.

Russian Front.—Soviet forces on defensive at Stalingrad, but attacked S.E. of Nalchik.

Australasia.—Announced that Gen. MacArthur had taken the field in New Guinea.

NOV. 18, Wednesday *1,173rd day*

Air.—U.S. Fortresses and Liberators bombed submarine bases at La Pallice and Lorient. R.A.F. bombers raided Turin.

North Africa.—Announced that advanced elements of British 1st Army, British and U.S. paratroops, and French forces had entered Tunisia at several points. U.S. bombed airfield at Bizerta and R.A.F. attacked aerodrome at Tunis.

Burma.—Wellington bombers from India raided Jap aerodromes in Burma.

General.—Pétain gave Laval power to make laws and issue decrees.

NOV. 19, Thursday *1,174th day*

North Africa.—Tank and infantry engagements in Tunisia between British and enemy; engagements also took place between French and German units.

Russian Front.—Special communiqué announced that Russians had routed a strong German force in the Caucasus and removed threat to Ordzhonikidze.

Australasia.—Jap cruiser and destroyer sunk off Solomons by Fortresses.

Burma.—R.A.F. Blenheims attacked Jap aerodrome at Pakokku.

NOV. 20, Friday *1,175th day*

Air.—R.A.F.'s night raid on Turin was heaviest yet made on Italy.

North Africa.—Enemy mechanized columns driven back by Allied advanced elements in Tunisia. R.A.F. and U.S. bombers raided airfields at Tunis and Bizerta; enemy aircraft bombed Algiers.

Libya.—Our troops occupied Benghazi.

Burma.—U.S. heavy bombers operating from India raided Mandalay.

NOV. 21, Saturday *1,176th day*

North Africa.—British advance units in Tunisia inflicted heavy damage on German armoured column.

Mediterranean.—Trapani and other aerodromes in Sicily raided by R.A.F.

Russian Front.—Germans announced that Russian attacks N.W. and S. of Stalingrad had "assumed the nature of an offensive."

Burma.—R.A.F. attacked Jap airfields at Mingaladon and Toungoo.

NOV. 22, Sunday *1,177th day*

Air.—R.A.F. bombers raided Stuttgart.

Russian Front.—Special communiqué announced that in offensive N.W. and S. of Stalingrad Soviet troops had advanced 40 to 50 miles and taken 13,000 prisoners.

Burma.—R.A.F. and U.S. bombers raided Akyab, Magwe and Mandalay.

NOV. 23, Monday *1,178th day*

Air.—U.S. Fortresses and Liberators attacked submarine base at St. Nazaire.

North Africa.—Darlan announced from Algiers that French West Africa had put itself under his orders.

Libya.—Our forces occupied Jedabia and Jalo.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops continued to advance N.W. and S. of Stalingrad, recapturing five more towns and taking 11,000 more prisoners.

Australasia.—In New Guinea Australian forces entered Gona.

NOV. 24, Tuesday *1,179th day*

North Africa.—In S. sector of Tunisia Allied paratroops repulsed enemy mechanized column and took prisoners. Bizerta, Tunis and Gabès attacked by our aircraft.

Russian Front.—Red Army advancing N.W. and S. of Stalingrad captured three German divisions and took 12,000 more prisoners. N. of Stalingrad Russian troops joined hands with city's defenders.

Flash-backs

1939

November 13. *Bombs dropped for first time on British soil, in the Shetlands.*

November 18. *Sinking of Dutch liner Simon Bolivar in North Sea marked opening of German magnetic mine campaign.*

1940

November 11. *Libreville, capital of Gaboon, occupied by Free French.*

November 12-13. *Fleet Air Arm attacked Italian navy at Taranto.*

November 14-15. *Heavy raid on Coventry from dusk to dawn.*

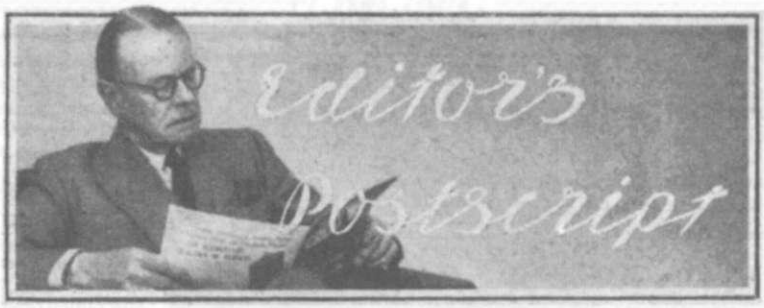
1941

November 14. *H.M.S. Ark Royal sank off Gibraltar after torpedo attack on previous day.*

November 18. *Eighth Army under Gen. Cunningham launched attack in Libya.*

November 20. *Germans opened large-scale attack on Moscow.*

November 22. *Germans claimed capture of Rostov-on-Don.*



On June 30, 1940, I wrote a special article in THE WAR ILLUSTRATED which began with these words: "At the moment of writing the only hope of a France resurgent would seem to lie in Africa." After giving in some detail my reasons for so thinking, including a reminiscence of travel with a high official of the Algerian army, I finished thus: "That France's colonial empire may save her from sinking to the status of a minor power if it acts in full accord with the British Empire is still a possibility." For nearly two years and a half the impotent Vichy government—impotent for all but mischief—appeared to be bent on a prolonged form of national suicide: not only tolerating the spectacle of its country degenerating into a vassal state, but willing that in the process it should bring ruin upon a faithful ally.

Soon, indeed, the men of Vichy were fallen so low that at the bidding of the conqueror they abjured the principles on which the Third Republic had been founded and for Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—the very battle cry of Democracy—substituted Work, Family, Country, a meaningless trio of words when so grouped, designed only to bring once glorious and independent France into the framework of an inchoate 'New Order' where all established ideals of justice and humanism were ruthlessly to be suppressed. A deplorable derogation of all greatness, the free institutions of a nation of splendid achievement and noble ideals being abrogated for the capricious rule of a feeble old man surrounded by the political adventurers whose selfish ambitions and rivalries had been the main cause of the Republic's downfall.

The first, perhaps the worst, betrayal of her own people and her former allies was allowing Japan to establish bases in many parts of the strategic land of Indo-China there to begin preparations for the eventual conquest of the Philippines, Malaya, Burma, and the South Pacific: Indo-China, the key that unlocked the door to all that followed Pearl Harbour, was handed over by Vichy's representatives almost without a shot; but when Britain had to secure Syria in order to protect not only her own vital interests in the Near East but also to prevent the further deterioration of the French colonial empire, that bitterly anti-British colonial High Commissioner, General Dentz, put up an energetic though futile resistance. And the British efforts to save important elements of the French fleet from falling into the hands of the Nazis were as bitterly opposed by order of the Vichy servitors of Hitler at Dakar and Oran, as though the ally they had so recently betrayed were bent only on their destruction.

To look back on these events, to find fallen France valiant only in facing at every turn her old ally, whose dearest wish was to succour her, is not a pleasant thing, but history will show that after the Vichy set-up the worst enemy of France was the debased and bewildered government of Pétain in which almost without exception Frenchmen who were noted for their anti-British opinions had access to the key positions. Darlan and Laval are two names that will long be remembered by the French people with strangely mixed feelings. Darlan, as head of the French Navy, was notoriously out of step with Britain even before the débâcle and did not hesitate to give stronger expression to his prejudice when he rose to power in Vichy as head of both her military and naval forces in the Pétain government. Laval, the foulest figure in the malodorous mess of modern Paris politics, eventually pushed himself into the prime position behind the simulacrum of power named Pétain and the anti-British Darlan suddenly found himself playing a lesser role as naval chief behind the glorified gangster. "Envy's a coal comes hissing hot from hell": Darlan was envious, and disgruntled. The mean rivalries of her leaders which brought France to her knees may yet lift her to her feet: a consummation devoutly to be wished.

After France had been made to play Hitler's game in many ways, she was sinking deeper in the mire of treachery until our Eighth Army had made its fine start with the destruction of Rommel's forces

What Think Ye of DARLAN?

in North Africa, what time the greatest armada in all history was secretly assembling in the western approaches of the Mediterranean: an armada designed to save Laval-led France from her corrupt and feeble government as well as to restore that vital seaway to the control of the United Nations. That Laval helped by any deep-laid treachery to his Nazi colleagues to facilitate this, double crosser though he be, is unbelievable; that Darlan did may not be so far outside credence. For although he may hate Britain from the traditional impulse of Trafalgar and from mean personal reasons, it may be that he dislikes Laval more than he dislikes Churchill; that he loves Hitler less than either. And in common with many other Frenchmen (again influenced by tradition) he would rather salute Old Glory than the Union Jack. Thus we begin to see how his presence in Algiers when the U.S. Army made its surprise attack may have been less accidental than it appeared. He was placed in a position that enabled him to do a good turn for the United Nations and for France herself while feeding a deep personal grudge.

As the one high Vichy official present in Algiers at the moment of the Anglo-American surprise attack his decision to cease hostilities and surrender to the American army (carried there thanks mainly to the Royal Navy and the R.A.F.) enabled him to do a great day's work for France, for the United Nations, while doing a bad one for Laval. The human vanities: how they can affect the course of history! But there was a further and a worthier influence at work: General Noguès, Resident-General of Morocco, was there also as it happened, and he and Mittelhauser were outstanding among all the French Colonial leaders in June 1940 in urging that the Colonial Empire should remain in arms against the Hun and so help the mother country to recover from her defeat. Noguès had been over-ruled by Vichy, just as General Mittelhauser had been in Syria, but while the latter eventually lost his job Noguès has held on "through chance and change" in Morocco and may well prove a force for French resurgence in view of the *fait accompli*: he, at least, has never been a willing collaborationist in a Nazi-ruled France. So we may yet see great good come out of evil.

While it is unlikely that the British could ever again regard Darlan as a clean-handed ally, as Mr. Churchill treated him in Paris in November 1939 and again in London in the following spring (how pathetic to look now on these old pictures of the little French naval chief who was so soon to be branded pro-Nazi!), strange things happen in War and a double-crosser should not be ignored if eventually the fortunes of the conflict throw him back into the arms if not the hearts of those he once left in the lurch.

There remains the possibility that some of the anti-British propaganda emanating from Vichy since the Pétain government moved there in 1940 may have been eye-wash to deceive the Nazi overlords. It is conceivable that men who are not at heart defeatists may under duress assume that antic disposition while hoping that things might so fall out that they would after all be able to take part in a real come-back and see the invader ignominiously ejected from their midst—just a possibility, not much more. Nothing can change the spots of those leopards Laval, Doriot, Déat, Bergery, and many others who were avowed defeatists long before the War. Only a man of great courage and unswerving public rectitude, like M. Herriot, could live "among the faithless faithful only he" . . . There may not be many Herriots inside France today, but there are millions who hate the Boche more than ever in the past, and they will have the last word one day.

As I write it is not easy to get a clear idea of the situation in North Africa. Pétain denounces Darlan before the world as a traitor, and it might be thought that we were witnessing the old game of the pot calling the kettle black. But the persistency with which Darlan, in throwing in his lot with the United Nations, claims to act under the authority of Pétain is significant. We must not exclude the possibility that there may be a ruse of war in the confusion of voices. Neither Pétain nor Darlan has ever shown himself callous about the fate of France. Mistaken, misguided, antipathetic to Britain as both have been held to be, their desire that France should somehow survive may have been honest enough, whereas Laval's foul record of political chicanery leaves no doubt that he would wallow in dishonour if his ill-gained wealth could be saved and possibly augmented thereby. The entry of America has helped Darlan to a decision for which we must be grateful, though it will yet involve some delicate negotiation as between our true and tried friends the De Gaullists, and their more dubious fellow-countrymen. In enlisting aid from any available source that can further our cause in the new and enlarging prospect of the Axis doom, the fortunes of war demand that we profit to the utmost from such cooperation. Not even with heroic Stalin have we always walked hand-in-hand.

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